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The effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching workplace writing

By

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*A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)
in the Centre for Research in Education and Educational Technology
(CREET) at The Open University, October 2014. Resubmitted, July 2015.*

Abstract

The present study assesses the effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing for learners of English as a foreign language in a workplace, which is a branch of an American company that explores oil and gas in Angola. By drawing on the genre-based approaches developed by Swales (1990) and Martin (2012), the study firstly sought to investigate the text types written in the workplace and the features deemed relevant for successful writing. Secondly, it sought to understand the extent to which an explicit genre-based approach could support learners with their writing, particularly the improvement of the readability of their texts. Data were collected through learners' sample texts, a questionnaire to specialist informants and an experiment, and were qualitatively and quantitatively analysed (Hammersley, 2007, p. 171). An email to make a request was identified as the most frequently written text and was used in the experiment, which was conducted with an experimental group (n=18) and a control group (n=18), both being made up of intermediate learners. While the experimental group received explicit-genre instruction in a classroom, the control group remained in their job, where they also practised the genre. The experimental group commented on the explicit genre lessons, and their comments indicated familiarisation with the need to concentrate attention on content, purpose, and audience when writing, and to provide everything a reader needs to understand a text with little effort and time. Furthermore, the two groups wrote a pre-test and a post-test, and the comparison of the readability scores (provided by two

specialist informants) favoured the experimental group. The texts written in the tests were further explored to assess whether the allowable order of moves, the choice of informational Theme and thematic progression (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) influenced the readability scores. Of the three measures, the allowable order of moves and informational Theme appeared to influence the readability scores. The overall result suggests that an explicit genre-based approach can be a suitable approach to teaching writing for learners in the workplace.

Keywords: genre-based approach, explicit genre, implicit genre, allowable order of moves, email genres, workplace writing, readability, informational Theme, thematic progression, foreign language.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The present thesis assesses and discusses the results of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing for learners of English as a foreign language in the context of a workplace, which is explained in detail in Chapter 3. The present chapter starts by explaining the use of the terms ‘explicit genre-based approach’, ‘English as a foreign language’ and ‘context’ in the expression ‘context of a workplace’. Then, it explains the rationale for choosing the topic of a genre-based approach and states the research questions that guided the present study. Five chapters follow Chapter 1, namely the literature review, methodology, data analysis and interpretation, discussion of the findings and limitations of the study. The final chapter, Chapter 6, provides conclusions, implications for teaching practice and research and puts forward research questions through which the present study can be carried forward.

1.1 Explicit genre-based approach

The term ‘explicit genre-based approach’ can be explained by looking at the following three traditions of genre: ‘English for Specific Purposes’ (ESP), ‘Systemic Functional Linguistics’ (SFL) and ‘New Rhetoric Studies’ (NRS) (Hyon, 1996, p. 693; Flowerdew, 2005, p. 322). The ESP and SFL genre traditions consider a genre as a ‘text type’ (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 147; Ivanič, 2004, p. 233; Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 8), and contend that text types are distinguishable by their communicative purposes (Swales, 1990; Eggins, 2004). For example, a text that tells ‘how

to do something' is a 'procedure' and a text that tells how and why something occurs is an 'explanation' (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks & Yallop, 2000, p. 9).

Text types have meaningful segments, which characterise stages through which people in a particular culture go in achieving their communicative purposes. The stages are termed 'moves' in the ESP genre tradition (Bhatia, 1993, p. 46; Henry & Roseberry, 2001, p. 153), and this term is used throughout the present thesis. Moves are meaningful stages in that they give a particular contribution to the achievement of the purpose of a genre as a whole (Eggins, 2004). They are characterised by specific linguistic features, which manifest themselves through 'steps' (ESP term) or through 'realizational patterns' (SFL term), as respectively explained by Henry and Roseberry (2001, p. 154) and Eggins (2004, p. 56). Moves (nonlinguistic stages such a salutation in an email) and linguistic features (words or word patterns chosen to realise the moves) are explicitly taught to learners in the ESP and SFL genre traditions, and it is from this explicitness that the term 'explicit genre-based approach' has been adopted for the present study.

The NRS tradition is different from the ESP and SFL genre traditions in that it does not put emphasis on explicit teaching (Hyon, 1996; Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). It is, therefore, an opposing tradition to an explicit genre-based approach in terms of teaching genres. The differences between explicit and implicit genre-based approaches will be elaborated upon further in the literature review.

1.2 English as a foreign language

The term 'English as a foreign language' (Littlewood, 1984, p. 2) is used in the present thesis to mean that English is not widely spoken in the country where the study was carried out. The country where the study carried out uses Portuguese as its official language, and it only uses English in very restricted situations such as in the workplace on which the present study focuses (hereafter the target workplace). This use of the term 'foreign language' is the one previous researchers appear to have adopted. For example, Yayli (2011) mentioned the USA and Australia as instances of second language learning for students of English and mentioned China as an instance of a country where English is learned as a foreign language. Similarly, Yasuda (2011, p. 127) used the term 'foreign language learners' to designate learners of English in Japan.

The present study could adopt the term 'English as an additional language' as an umbrella term for 'English as a foreign language' or 'English as a second language'. However, it retains the term 'English as a foreign language' as the situations of learning may have different implications (Yasuda, 2011); second language learning situations provide learners with more exposure to the target language (the language being learned) compared to foreign language learning situations. Learners in a second language learning situation can speak the target language when they go shopping, or when they go to restaurants, for example. In a foreign language learning situation, by contrast, they will speak the official language in most cases. The term 'English as a foreign language' might

be differently defined in other situations, but the way it is defined here provides an insight into how it is used in the present thesis.

1.3 Context

The term 'context' is used in the present thesis to mean the situation of language use, the target workplace. Two dimensions of context are taken into consideration. The first dimension entails the fact that for each instance of language use in the target workplace, the term 'context' is used to encompass Halliday's (2007 [1975], p. 134) register variables of 'field' (the content being dealt with), 'tenor' (the role relationships between people involved in the use of language), and 'mode' (the *medium* through which the content is used). Medium here means that a text can be written, or it can be spoken, and it also means the role language plays in the communication. For example, the way the linguistic items of a genre can be effectively organised to achieve the overall communicative purpose is part of the mode dimension of a context (Eggins, 2004; Martin & Rothery, 2012).

The second dimension of 'context' refers to the variations in the ways genres are used in the target workplace in comparison with other similar workplaces around the world. More specifically, it refers to cultural variations, 'context of culture' (Halliday, 2007 [1971], p. 44). The context of culture was exemplified by Butt et al (2000, p. 3), who stated that a text accompanying vegetable shopping in a North American supermarket would be different from the same text accompanying vegetable shopping in a Pacific Island supermarket. More succinctly, the present study uses

the first dimension of the term 'context' to refer to the variations of language within the target workplace, and it uses the second dimension to refer to the variations of the allowable order of moves in genres across different workplaces around the world.

1.4 Rationale for choosing the topic

The topic of a genre-based approach, particularly the effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing, is chosen for investigation in the present study for two reasons. The first reason is that in the target workplace employees use English for very specific purposes such as writing emails to make requests and to inform on a completed task (as will be evidenced in Chapter 4). However, they are only helped with general English, which is taught through the Headway Series, textbooks designed by Soars and Soars (2007). The present study, therefore, was aimed at bridging the gap the employees might experience between what they learn in the classroom and what they actually do in their job, a point that resonates with Evans (2012). The choice of an explicit genre-based approach for the present study was particularly influenced by the knowledge expressed in the literature, which states that a genre-based approach supports learners with contextualised learning (Ventola, 2005; Gardner, 2012; Wingate, 2012). That is to say, the texts learners need to use in a particular context are investigated in terms of genre and register as a prelude to teaching practice (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Martin, 2012).

Several studies on genre analysis have already been carried out (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Dos Santos, 2002; Maques, 2008; Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). The existence of these studies, therefore, would suggest that once a genre has been identified, an analysis made in a similar genre would be used to support learners in a given context. However, as the literature review in the present thesis will indicate, each context of genre use is unique (Hollis-Turner & Scholtz, 2010; Evans, 2012). That is to say, genres need to be identified and analysed for each context if they are to be taught in the way they are expected by readers in the context.

The second reason for choosing the topic is that the employees in the target workplace learn English as a foreign language, and their company gives them little time to learn in a classroom (minimum 5 weeks and maximum 14 weeks). As defined above, a foreign language learning situation provides little exposure to the target language, so that this little exposure to learning in the classroom, together with the fact that learners are given little time to learn English, served as one of the basis for trying a teaching approach that could accelerate learning. In fact, Hyland (2007) suggested that an explicit genre-based approach might reduce the time that learners could take in learning through exposure only.

However, what remains to be known is the effectiveness of an explicit genre-based approach when compared with an implicit genre-based approach. That is, numerous studies have thus far been conducted (Henry & Roseberry, 1998; Burns, 2001; Parks, 2001; Cheng, 2007; Ho, 2010; Myskow & Gordon, 2010; Yayli, 2011; Chen & Su, 2012), but very few of

them have used a control variable that is characterised by the conception of genre in the NRS genre tradition, in which genres are not explicitly taught (Hyon, 1996; Hyland, 2007; Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). Most importantly, 'one of the important goals of genre analysis is to improve student writing' (Cheng, 2007, p. 288), but studies using an explicit genre-based approach and assessing readability in students' texts are underrepresented in workplace writing literature.

The term 'readability' is used in the present study to refer to the properties of a text which help a reader in the target workplace to quickly identify the communicative purpose of a text (Eggins, 2004) and learn the actions required. The features include 'an effective ordering of moves', 'thematic choices' and 'thematic progressions' (explained in the literature review chapter). These properties, it was hypothesised in the present study, meant the reader was not expected to struggle with the text to understand the intended meaning. Based on the rationale for choosing the topic, the present study answered the three research questions presented below, which are substantiated in the literature review and explained in detail in Chapter 3.

1.5 Research questions

1. What text types do the target learners write in their workplace?
2. What text features are valued in the target workplace?
3. What effects can an explicit genre-based approach have on the readability of the texts written by the target learners?

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter starts by clarifying the material sources and the criteria used to select the material in the process of literature review. Then it compares the explicit and implicit genre-based approaches in order to further clarify the choice of an explicit genre-based approach for the present study. Next, the chapter describes the two genre traditions that constitute explicit genre-based approaches and continues by explaining and discussing the analyses that are undertaken in explicit genre-based approaches, namely at genre, register and linguistic levels as analyses at these levels are carried out in the present study. Finally, the chapter discusses some genre analyses and teaching that have been undertaken by previous researchers with a view to revealing the necessity of analysing genres in the present study and implementing an explicit genre-based approach in the target workplace.

2.1 Material sources and criteria for selecting the material for review

Two material sources were used in carrying out the literature review. The first material source was the research articles published in peer-reviewed journals such as *English for Specific Purposes* and the *Journal of Second Language Writing*. Materials from these peer-reviewed journals were obtained through The Open University's Online Library and by using keywords such as 'genre-based approach', 'explicit genre' and 'workplace writing', which were presented at the end of the abstract for the present thesis. The keywords generated numerous research articles, and for each

article that was generated, the list of references was scanned in order to obtain further articles. All the articles obtained were classified into four categories described by Murray and Beglar (2009).

The first category was 'philosophical enquiry' and articles in it involved no collection of data (Murray & Beglar, 2009, p. 42). As described by Murray and Beglar (2009, p. 42), this category 'involves thinking critically about important issues in a field, creating new knowledge, generating new avenues for research and challenging the status quo.' The second category was 'quantitative approaches' and articles in it involved 'gathering and analysing numerical data' (Murray & Beglar, 2009, p. 43). The third category was 'qualitative approaches' and articles in it involved collecting non-numerical data (Murray & Beglar, 2009, p. 47). The fourth category was 'mixed-methods approaches', which gathered and analysed both numerical and non-numerical data. While all the articles falling within these four categories were relevant to the present study, substantial review was focused on the articles under the categories of 'quantitative methods', 'qualitative methods' and 'mixed-methods' (Murray & Beglar, 2009, p. 42). This choice of focus was made because the present study combined quantitative and qualitative methods, and so that a comparison would be made between the results of the present study and the ones of previous studies.

The second material source entailed published academic books, which provided articles that were published as book chapters. As well as the articles obtained through The Open University's Online Library, articles

published as book chapters were only substantially reviewed if they were under the categories specified above. Published academic books were also useful in providing knowledge that was used to clarify concepts about the ESP and SFL genre traditions in the process of review. In short, no difficulties were experienced in terms of material sources as The Open University's Online Library and several published academic books in the field of genre-based approaches were available.

2.2 Comparison of explicit and implicit genre-based approaches

This section compares and discusses the explicit and implicit genre-based approaches in order to establish the way in which the approaches differ and the way in which they converge. The comparison provides a conclusion that each genre-based approach may have its merit in different contexts, but the merit should be understood on the basis of research.

As was stated above (Section 1.1), the difference between explicit and implicit genre-based approaches resides in the fact that the explicit genre-based approaches support learners with the knowledge of the properties of text types such as 'moves' (defined on p. 2 as nonlinguistic stages of a genre) and the linguistic features (Flowerdew & Wan, 2010). The implicit genre-based approach, by contrast, suggests that genre learning is not a matter of learners being taught the conventions of genres, but is a matter of having learners involved in situations in which genres are used (Hyon, 1996). The implicit genre-based approach scholars have proposed alternatives for classroom teaching, but such alternatives are only based

on exposure. That is, a teacher only promotes 'class discussions that naturally motivate students to respond in certain genres' (Hyon, 1996, p. 709).

The explicit and implicit genre-based approaches undertake analyses of contexts in which genres are used before teaching takes place in order to understand learner needs (the purpose for which language is learned), but they do it in different ways. The explicit genre-based approaches collect texts, which they believe provide insights into the context in which texts are used—'texts in context'—by using linguistic methods (Gardner, 2012, p. 52). By contrast, the implicit genre-based approach investigates the practices in which genres are used—'writers in context' or 'practices in context'—by using ethnographic methods such as observations and interviews to gain insights into the writers' views of text types (Gardner, 2012, p. 52; Coffin & Donohue, 2012, p. 64).

The terms 'texts in context' and 'writers in context' were used by Gardner (2012, p. 52) and Coffin and Donohue (2012, p. 64) when comparing genre analysis carried out in the SFL genre tradition and the analysis carried out in Academic Literacies. Academic Literacies is another tradition of teaching writing and is similar to the NRS genre tradition in the way it analyses learner needs. In other words, it uses 'observation of the practices surrounding the production of texts' and the writers' points of view of the texts produced (Gardner, 2012, p. 53). More specifically, Academic literacies focuses attention on (a) the meaning students attach to academic writing, (b) similarities and differences of academic writing in

different disciplines, (c) what students do with texts and technologies in their personal and academic life and (d) whether these focuses help students to learn in a meaningful way (Coffin & Donohue, 2012).

Similar to the NRS genre tradition, Academic Literacies has focused less attention on explicitly supporting students with textual and linguistic features that are deemed to make a text successful in a particular context (Coffin & Donohue, 2012). In fact, Lillis (2003) and Lea (2004) (cited in Lea & Street, 2006, p. 370) suggested that Academic Literacies needed 'to be developed as a design frame, with a focus on pedagogy.' In particular, they emphasised the relevance of teachers in the Academic Literacies to explicitly support learners with their learning of genres in a classroom.

However, recent research on genre-based approaches indicates that both explicit and implicit genre-based approaches have started to combine 'texts in context' and 'writers in context' (Gardner, 2012, p. 53) as is evidenced in the following three examples. Firstly, in her study entitled 'Genres and registers of student report writing: An SFL perspective', Gardner (2012, p. 52) analysed texts and the practices in which the texts were used. Secondly, in a study using the SFL genre-based approach, in which 18 Japanese high-school students were helped with an English application letter to university, Myskow and Gordon (2010) first helped students to investigate the university context to learn how the English application letter was used, and then taught the moves and linguistic choices of the genre exemplar. Thirdly, in explaining the procedures a teacher in the NRS genre tradition would follow when addressing the

‘Common Core Writing Standard’ in North America, Collin (2013, p. 220) stated that first learners would collect texts from their work environments, then they would find out how the texts are used, and finally they would analyse multiple texts to unravel the form and content. For this last procedure, learners would ‘pay attention to word choice, sentence structure, topic, layout, and rhetorical appeals’ (Collin, 2013, p. 220). The three studies above, therefore, suggest that the two approaches to genre (explicit and implicit) have started to converge in the way they seek learner needs, but they still diverge in their beliefs of the methodology that can be used for genres to be effectively learned.

Both explicit and implicit genre-based approaches appear to have merits in different contexts, but the merits need to be investigated. For example, Lazar and Ellis (2010, p. 155) reported on a study that used an ‘implicit-genre methodology’ to help learners understand assignment guidelines and assessment criteria when writing their masters-level assignments in London. Rather than focusing on moves and linguistic features of the assignments, support to learners was limited to peer review among learners to assess how the assignment guidelines would be followed. The assessment of the methodology through a questionnaire and written products revealed that the writing of assignments was improved, and learners were overall satisfied with their achievement. Based on this result, Lazar and Ellis (2010) concluded that a genre-based pedagogy could still inform a teaching programme for writing even if it was implicitly implemented. Similarly, numerous studies have used explicit genre-based methodology (Henry & Roseberry, 1998; Burns, 2001; Ho, 2009; Chen &

Su, 2012) and, as will be discussed in detail in Section 2.11, the results have been beneficial to learners. Thus the results of implicit and explicit genre-based approaches suggest that each of the approaches may have its merits in different contexts. In the implicit genre-based teaching, only one study has been identified, but this paucity aligns with the fact that 'applications [of genre-based approaches in the NRS] have been reported on a case-by-case basis rather than in terms of larger initiatives affecting multiple classrooms' (Hyon, 1996, p. 710).

While each of the genre-based approaches (explicit or implicit) may have its merit in different contexts, gauging the merit of any one of the approaches should be carried out on the basis of research (Hargreaves, 2007). That said, the present study was an attempt to gauge the merit of an explicit genre-based approach in teaching writing for the target workplace. As the study drew on the ESP and SFL genre traditions, these genre traditions are explained below.

2.3 ESP and SFL genre traditions

The ESP and SFL have different focuses in teaching genres, but they appear to converge in their consideration of language learning. The following subsections clarify the convergence by first explaining each genre tradition. Then, it provides the reasons for the present study to draw on both the ESP and SFL genre traditions at genre-level analysis and only on the SFL genre tradition at register and linguistic level analyses.

2.3.1 The ESP genre tradition

The ESP genre tradition can be explained by looking at the five phases of the ESP development mentioned by Hutchinson and Waters (1983, p. 9–14): ‘register analysis’, ‘rhetorical or discourse analysis’, ‘target situation analysis’ ‘skills and strategies’ analysis, and ‘language learning’ analysis. Register analysis was the first phase, and it entailed analysing the linguistic features of the text types learners needed to use in a given context. For example, linguistic features such as ‘the present simple tense’ and ‘the passive voice’ were identified and constituted the basis for teaching (Hutchinson & Waters, 1983, p. 10). This analysis focused on a sentence level, ‘sentence’ here meaning a grammatical unit that ‘starts with a capital letter and ends with a full-stop’ (Ho, 2009, p. 340).

Rhetorical or discourse level analysis was the second phase, and it focused on units above sentence. For example, analysis focused on the process of joining sentences and the linguistic components that were used to join sentences. More specifically, analysis first focused on text organisational patterns and then it focused on the linguistic features that were used to join the patterns to form the text. This phase indicates the actual start of genre analysis in the ESP, and it is still evident in current studies. For example, Cheng (2007, p. 300), a researcher in the ESP genre tradition, used the term ‘rhetorical consideration’ when undertaking textual analysis above sentence level.

The target situation analysis was the third phase, and it focused attention on the context in which learners used the language. More specifically, the

context was first identified and then texts used in the context were collected and analysed in terms of rhetorical and linguistic features that were predominant. The target situation analysis is still evident in current studies carried out within the ESP genre tradition. For example, Cheng (2007) guided learners to investigate the academic context in which they were going to operate. More specifically, learners were asked to collect research articles that had been published in their field with the view to analysing the rhetorical and linguistic features that were predominant (Cheng, 2007, p. 291). Similarly, Yayli (2011) considered the context of genre use by consulting the students about the genres they wanted to study, so that the genres were analysed in terms of moves and linguistic features.

Skills and strategies analysis was the fourth phase and focused on the 'thinking processes' involved in language use, rather than simply focusing on language use, which was the focus of the first three phases (Hutchinson & Waters, 1983, p. 13). Specifically, focus was placed on the need for learners to be able to read (and sometimes listen to) and interpret relevant texts in English when they were instructed by using their mother tongue. In the skills and strategies analysis phase, focus on rhetorical and linguistic features was considered as unnecessary since the skills and strategies learners acquired were deemed to equip them with sufficient knowledge to cope with every text type.

The fifth phase of the ESP development was 'language learning' analysis, which involved an understanding of the processes that facilitated the

learning of a language (Hutchinson & Waters, 1983, p. 14). This phase combined the previous four phases, and it particularly entailed the consideration that a syllabus should primarily be framed on the basis of topics such as 'electricity' and 'pumps' and the teaching of language that learners needed to talk about the topics, for example, to be able to describe an electrical system (Hutchinson & Waters, 1983, p. 92). More importantly, the syllabus should be used flexibly in order to take into account learners' interest, enjoyment and involvement in the lessons. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1983, p. 14), language learning analysis is the main concern of the ESP.

2.3.2 The SFL genre tradition

The SFL genre tradition draws on 'Systemic Functional Grammar', which considers language in terms of the whole text, a text being 'a stretch of language that hangs together and is appropriate to its context' (Martin & Rothery, 2012, p. 143). The language that learners need to use in a particular context is firstly analysed in terms of stages; a genre is seen as 'a staged, goal-oriented social process' (Martin, 2009, p. 10). A genre entails people achieving goals with others in society, and to do that, people usually need to move through more than one stage. Secondly, the language is analysed in terms of linguistic features that expert writers have chosen to realise the stages (Martin, 2009; Gardner, 2012).

From those analyses it becomes clear that, as opposed to the ESP tradition, which started its development by focusing on sentence level (Hutchinson & Waters, 1983), the SFL tradition has always considered

language as a whole text (Martin & Rothery, 2012). Consequently, language that learners need is analysed and taught as a whole text.

The SFL genre tradition considers a text as a stretch of language hanging together in that every text expresses three meanings that are woven together, namely 'ideational', 'interpersonal' and 'textual' meanings (Butt et al., 2000, p. 5–6; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 29–30). More specifically, a text helps people to respectively (a) write or talk about their experiences, (b) interact with each other, and (c) organise their experiences and interactions in different contexts (Butt et al., 2000; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). These meanings will be clarified in more detail later in the present chapter.

In expressing the three meanings mentioned above, people engage with the context in which they are involved. In the SFL genre tradition, this context is of two types: 'context of culture' and 'context of situation', which were initially identified by Malinowski (1923), as explained by Ventola (2005, p. 21), Halliday (2007 [1971], p. 44) and Gardner (2012, p. 52). In the SFL genre approach the context of cultures is considered from the perspective of macro staging of a text. That is, a writer of a recount, for example, is likely to follow the stages that are expected in a recount such as 'Orientation', 'Record of events' and 'Coda' (Butt et al., 2000, p. 10) if the text is to be seen as appropriate. Otherwise, the text may be seen as inappropriate.

The context of situation prompts a language user to make linguistic choices, which are more specifically expressed through ideational,

interpersonal and textual meanings. That is, when giving a recount on oil and gas, for example, a language user should choose words from the field of oil and gas rather than words that belong in the field of agriculture. Similarly, the words chosen and the ways they are structured will differ from person to person being addressed. For example, if the recount is addressed to a friend, it will likely be characterised by 'informal language' whereas it will be characterised by 'formal language' (Eggins, 2004, p. 103) if it is addressed to a professor, as an assignment.

The mode in which the recount is delivered will also make a difference. That is to say, the role of language will vary depending on whether the recount is spoken or written. If the recount is spoken (face-to-face interaction), language will help to immediately obtain the information that the speaker fails to provide; the listener will ask questions. By contrast, language will 'constitute the whole of the activity' if the recount is written (Butt et al., 2000, p. 189). That is to say, the writer needs to ensure that (a) the linguistic items presented in previous sentences are referred to again, (b) the topic being dealt with does not constantly change, (c) the subtopics make reference to the general topic being focused upon, (d) there are 'interpretable conjunctive relations between sentences, and (e) it is clear what the text is trying to do (Eggins, 2004, p. 54).

In the SFL genre tradition, it is crucial for learners to be able to make ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings if they are to be successful with their writing in a given context. In fact, Christie (1999, p. 761), in reference to Halliday (1975), stated that 'To learn a language [was] to

learn how to mean'. This statement suggests that, as well as the ESP genre tradition, the SFL genre tradition helps students with language learning, but it gives primacy to meaning making. The following section clarifies the convergence that appears to be emerging between the SFL and ESP genre traditions.

2.4 The ESP and SFL convergence

The explanations of the ESP and SFL traditions above indicate that the two genre traditions currently tend to converge in the process of considering language learning as a meaning-making process. In the ESP, for example, Hutchinson and Waters (1983, p.33–4) considered the context of a sentence as relevant in that the same sentence could have different meanings in 'different contexts'. Similarly, in a study using an ESP genre-based approach, Cheng (2007, p. 293) drew learners' attention to the choice of words that were appropriate to the context in which learners were writing. Thus although the two genre traditions (the ESP and SFL) have different primacies, respectively 'language learning' and 'meaning making', they can be drawn upon in a study that helps learners with their explicit learning of a genre.

The present study draws on the ESP and SFL genre traditions in attempting to help the target learners (the learners in the target workplace) with their workplace writing, but this simultaneous consideration of the approaches is only made at genre level. At register and linguistic levels, the present study draws on the SFL genre tradition because, in comparison with the ESP genre tradition, the SFL genre tradition carries

out more detailed register- and linguistic-level analyses, which may help foreign language learners to have a grasp of how a foreign language is structured and how meanings are made in different contexts (Christie, 1999; Coffin & Donohue, 2012). Furthermore, the linguistic and rhetorical analyses carried out in the SFL genre tradition, as will be indicated below, are known to enable learners not only to interpret and understand texts but also to explain and evaluate successful and unsuccessful features of their texts (Eggins, 2004, p. 329). The following sections explain and discuss genre-level analysis and register-and linguistic level analysis as a basis for the analyses that are carried out in Chapter 4 of the present thesis.

2.5 Genre-level analysis

This section first explains the procedures involved in genre-level analysis by clarifying the criterion used for identifying moves. Then, it clarifies the types of moves and analysis of moves for teaching purposes. At this stage of clarification, the section also focuses on a reservation that is expressed about the belief in the effect of a genre-level analysis and teaching. The section provides a conclusion that a genre-level analysis may be beneficial to learners being prepared to participate in a social context as well as learners who are already engaged in a given social context.

A genre-level analysis involves two procedures. The first procedure is to identify moves and name them in a text type. As was defined in the introduction to the present thesis (Section 1.1), a move is a macro stage in a text type and contributes to the overall achievement of a communicative purpose (Henry & Roseberry, 2001). A text type can be split into rhetorical

components by using 'formal' or 'functional' criteria (Eggins, 2004, p. 60). According to Eggins (2004), formal criteria split a text into paragraphs or paragraphs into sentences, for example. By contrast, functional criteria split a text type into stages that have particular meanings in the text. For example, an email on a completed task and an email to make a request will have 'Beginnings', 'Middles' and 'Ends' (split on the basis of formal criteria), but the beginnings, middles and ends will not do the same thing in the different texts (Eggins, 2004, p. 61). So moves are identified by asking what a rhetorical component is doing that has a particular contribution to the overall achievement of the purpose of a particular text type (functional criteria), and the moves should be named according to their contributions (Eggins, 2004, p. 61).

The second procedure involves looking at the allowable order of moves in a text type (Henry & Roseberry, 2001, p. 154). That is, analysis should focus on which move comes first, which one comes second and so on in the way people usually go about achieving their communicative purpose in a particular genre. The term 'usually' is relevant in this consideration of moves as it indicates the ways that people are expected to proceed in achieving a communicative purpose in a particular culture. For example, Eggins (2004, p. 61) used the term 'habitualized' to indicate the way people in a particular culture are accustomed to going about achieving their communicative purposes. In reference to Ventola (1987), Eggins (2004, p. 61) presented the sequence of the following moves in a service encounter genre: 'Sales Initiation ^ Sales Request ^ Sales Compliance ^ Price [. . .]'. Those moves indicate the meaningful rhetorical components

through which people are expected to go when purchasing items at a post office in the culture where Ventola identified the genre.

Some moves are obligatory and some are optional. Obligatory moves are always present for the effective achievement of a communicative purpose whereas optional moves are only present if they are deemed to add value to the achievement of a communicative purpose (Henry & Roseberry 1998, p. 147). Thus, identifying obligatory moves and teaching them to learners is paramount in the explicit genre-based approaches.

As the existence of specific moves in a text type is a result of 'habitualization' (Eggins, 2004, p. 61), a genre-level analysis for teaching purposes requires collecting a number of text types. These text types are analysed in order to identify recurrent moves. For example, Henry and Roseberry (1998) collected 20 exemplars of tourist information texts and analysed the moves of such texts with the purpose of determining the effect of a genre-based approach to teaching writing. In another study (Henry & Roseberry, 2001), they collected and analysed the moves of 40 letters of a job application written by native speakers of English. With that analysis, Henry and Roseberry (2001) aimed at making the allowable order of moves visible to non-native speakers of English so these non-native speakers would compete with native speakers on an equal basis in seeking employment. Similarly, Flowerdew and Wan (2006, p. 138) analysed 25 'authentic tax computation letters' and explored the ways communicative purpose was achieved in an accounting firm in Hong Kong. In yet another study, Sadeghi and Samuel (2013) analysed 200 letters of

appeal in a public university in Malaysia in order to determine the moves. Analysis of moves for teaching purposes in the explicit genre-based is, then, believed to be paramount in equipping learners with the knowledge of the ways people usually go about achieving their communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993; Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Flowerdew & Wan, 2006; Sadeghi & Samuel, 2013).

Despite the belief in the effectiveness of teaching from a genre-level analysis, this teaching has been criticised by opponents of explicit genre-based approaches, as pointed out by Ivanič (2004) and Johns (2011). Opponents suggest that teaching from genre-level analysis is 'prescriptive' and 'simplistic' (Hyland, 2007, p.151). However, current tendencies in the explicit genre-based approaches recognise that the allowable order of moves may change; some moves may be dropped, and some moves may be added as societies change. For example, Kress (2012, p. 28) recognised the essence of the stability of moves in a genre, but he suggested that learners should be familiar with the fact that 'generic form is never totally fixed'. Similarly, in reference to genre as a 'semiotic system' (a system that makes meaning) (Martin, 2001, p. 155), Martin (2012, p. 122) states that 'all semiotic systems, namely, the fact that they are dynamic open systems — for purposes of survival they have a built-in ability to adapt to their environment and so evolve.'

Thus although the explicit genre-based approaches have been criticised, they indicate to be powerful tools for learners to develop their abilities to write in different contexts. More importantly, the changes of genres in a

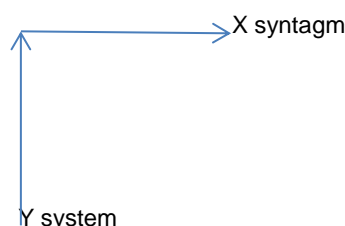
particular context may take time, so that learners being instructed for a particular context will benefit from genre-level analysis. That is to say, by the time changes happen, learners are members of the context of genre use, and they become agents of change. For learners who are already engaged in their job, as is the case of the present study, genre-level analysis may only be a matter of consciousness-raising. That is to say, learners may be supported to improve the texts they already write on a daily basis. To be certain of the effect of genre-level analysis in the target workplace, therefore, the present study explores the extent to which the target learners can improve the readability of their texts by using the allowable order of moves in an email to make a request. Next is the explanation and analysis of register and linguistic-level analyses that are undertaken in the SFL genre tradition.

2.6 Register-level analysis in the SFL genre tradition

This section first clarifies how the construction of a text is considered in the SFL genre tradition and then focuses on register dimensions. Finally, it provides a conclusion that awareness of register dimensions may be of paramount importance to foreign language learners, with particular emphasis on learners in the target workplace.

The construction of a text in the SFL genre tradition is considered as consisting of an intersection between 'syntagm' and 'system' (Eggins, 2004, p. 191–2) and can be illustrated by the two axes (X and Y) in Figure 1 below (Eggins, 2004, p. 91). Axis X corresponds to syntagm or structure, and Axis Y corresponds to system.

Figure 1: Intersections between syntagm and system, adapted from Eggins, 2004, p. 91



Syntagm is characterised by a sequence of *word groups* (hereafter ‘group’, explained below) that collocate or fit with each other, such as in Text 1 below.

Text 1

Maria, proofread my essay!

That is to say, ‘Maria’ ^ ‘proofread’ ^ ‘my essay’ (^ meaning ‘followed by’) (Firkins, 2007, p. 345). In this structure, the group ‘proofread’ collocates with the group ‘my essay’. ‘Proofread’ could also collocate with ‘my email’ and ‘my report’. However, it could not collocate with ‘my computer’. In other words, the groups ‘proofread’ and ‘computer’ do not form a structure.

The group ‘proofread’ could collocate with all possible groups such as ‘email’, ‘report’, and ‘book’, and the structure that constitutes Text 1 above could always be accurate in talking about different fields or topics (register analysis) (Eggins, 2004, p. 192). However, Text 1 would be appropriate if it were addressed to some people while it would be inappropriate if addressed to others; this contrast is where the consideration of system comes in.

System is a totality of linguistic and rhetorical options from which language users choose to express meanings appropriately in different contexts

(Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Text 1, for example, would be appropriate if it depicted a student addressing a colleague (equal status). However, it would be inappropriate if it depicted a student addressing a professor (unequal status). If addressing a professor, the student would be likely to say: *Professor Edward, could you proofread my essay?* (Edward being Maria's surname). That is to say, the student would choose 'Professor Edward' instead of 'Maria' and would choose 'could you proofread' instead of 'proofread' as a result of the 'tenor dimension' of register that is involved in the interactions (Eggins, 2004, p. 100).

Another dimension of register manifests itself in the way Text 1 is written. Text 1 starts with a vocative (Maria), which is also a tenor dimension. However, it typically signals a face-to-face interaction rather than a written interaction, in which the reader and the writer are spatially distant from each other (Eggins, 2004). Vocatives made up of *name only*, that is, without being preceded by a cordial expression such as *Dear Maria* as opposed to *Maria only* (see Text 1), are also extensively used in email correspondences (as will be seen in Chapter 4), but emails have been found to use both written and spoken features (Marques, 2008; Evans, 2012). Text 1 (if face-to-face communication), then, suggests that the role of language would be supplemented by extra-linguistic aspects of communication, and it would be minor to the role of language in a writer/reader situation.

While in a face-to-face interaction people interacting would use language spontaneously in talking to each other, in a written interaction they would

use language 'synoptically' (Eggins, 2004, p. 93); that is to say, all the pieces of information would be signalled to the reader before details are given, and efforts could be made to ensure the development of a text goes from known information to unknown information (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 93–4) although it is not always done in that way as some written communication, such as email correspondences, may be characterised by a mixture of spoken and written modes (Marques, 2008).

Awareness of the register dimensions of a text may be beneficial to foreign language learners, who may initially concentrate on structure rather than system in constructing their texts (Yasuda, 2011). That is, awareness of register will help learners to differentiate between writing to a co-worker of the same status and writing to their supervisor, for example. Similarly, the awareness of register will help learners know that when communicating with someone through writing, they need to use language in a way that their reader learns every piece of information. This use of language requires choosing from available and appropriate fields (field), understanding the impact of writer/reader relationships in communication (tenor) and organising text in a way that fits the mode of interaction in question (mode) (Eggins, 2004; Coffin & Donohue, 2012).

The register dimensions of field, tenor and mode manifest themselves through linguistic meanings, which are respectively designated 'ideational', 'interpersonal' and 'textual' meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 29; Martin & Rothery, 2012, p. 144); these meanings are the focus of the next section.

2.7 Linguistic-level analyses

This section provides detailed clarifications of linguistic-level analyses in the SFL genre tradition. Following Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 64), the clarifications and analyses are made at the level of ‘clauses’, which are broken into ‘constituents’ for the analyses of meanings (The terms ‘clause’ and ‘constituents’ will be explained below). For each meaning that is explained and analysed, a focus is made on the usefulness for the target workplace. As was stated above (Section 2.4), the analyses provide a basis for the analyses that are carried out in Chapter 4 of the present thesis. That is to say, the texts the target learners write on a daily basis will be first analysed by looking at the three meanings in order to decide on which meaning or meanings the learners already have strengths and on which meaning or meanings they might need support.

2.7.1 Ideational meaning

Ideational meaning is analysed in two dimensions: ‘experiential’ and ‘logical’ meanings (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 309). The experiential meaning is expressed through constituents of a clause that are labelled ‘Participant’, ‘Process’ and ‘Circumstance’ (Butt et al., 2000, p. 48). These constituents are explained in detail in the next subsections as they are used in the classroom, in the present study, when helping the target learners with their writing. The explanation begins with the terms ‘constituents’ and ‘clause’, so that their meanings are clear throughout the present chapter in particular and in the thesis as a whole. This subsection ends with the hypothesis that if foreign language learners are helped with

the analysis of ideational meanings, they might increase the readability of their texts.

Constituency (for constituents) is the fact that a linguistic unit is ‘made up’ of other linguistic units (Egins, 2004, p. 60). For example, the command ‘Proofread my essay’ is made up of ‘proofread’ and ‘my essay’. At linguistic level, constituency is clarified by the SFL genre tradition through what has been called ‘rank scale’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 9): morpheme < word < group or phrase < clause (‘<’ used here to mean ‘is below’). Thus each component in the ‘rank scale’ is made up of one or more of the components that are right below it (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 9).

In the command above (Proofread my essay), ‘Proofread’ and ‘my essay’ are groups, but ‘my’ and ‘essay’ are not. They are simply words, and they are not analysed as constituents in experiential meaning. In other words, constituents of clauses only qualify as groups if they answer questions such as ‘who’?, ‘what’?, ‘where’? ‘why’? and ‘when’? (Butt et al., 2000, p. 63; Egins, 2004, p. 159). Groups make up a clause, so the groups ‘Proofread’ and ‘my essay’ make up the clause ‘Proofread my essay.’ The groups labelled ‘Participant’, ‘Process’ and ‘Circumstance’ (Butt et al., 2000, p. 48) are clarified in the following subsections.

A Participant is typically realised by a ‘nominal group’, or it can be realised by a ‘prepositional phrase’—a group beginning with a preposition, as seen in the questions it answers: ‘Who?’, ‘Which?’, ‘What?’, ‘To whom?’ and ‘For whom?’ (Butt et al., 2000, p. 63). The following example (Table 1

below) illustrates two Participants that are nominal groups (labelled NG), and another Participant that is a prepositional phrase (labelled PP).

Table 1: Illustration of experiential constituents of a clause

Maria	proofread	the essay	for me	this morning
Participant (NG)	Process	Participant (NG)	Participant (PP)	Circumstance

In the analysis of experiential meaning, Participant is labelled further based upon the process in which it is involved, but such analysis is not carried out in detail here as it is not used in the present study. This further analysis will only be given a brief focus after the explanation of ‘Process’ has been given.

A Process is typically realised by a ‘verbal group’ (Butt et al., 2000, p. 50) and is basically classified into ‘doing’ such as *work* and *travel*, ‘mental’ and ‘verbal’ such as *think* and *say* respectively and ‘being’ such as the forms of the verb *to be*. These basic Process types are further classified and details can be found in Butt et al. (2000, p. 51), Eggins (2004, p. 214) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 179).

As stated above, Process types help to sub-classify Participants. In Table 1, for example, the Process is ‘doing’ (material Process), and, as well as some other verbs of doing (material processes), it construes Participants such as ‘Actor’, ‘Goal’, and ‘Beneficiary’ (Butt et al., 2000, p. 54). Thus in Table 1, ‘Maria’ is Actor, ‘the essay’ is Goal and ‘for me’ is Beneficiary. These Participant roles are not analysed in detail in the present study since they may add a burden on the ‘metalanguage’ (language to talk about language, Butt et al., 2000, p. 47) that may be

used to help the target learners; the target learners only need to use English for their daily-work correspondence. For the analysis in the classroom with students, in the present study, the terms 'Participant', 'Process' and 'Circumstance' were deemed as sufficient for helping foreign language learners understand the possible constituents of an English clause and provide every piece of information needed.

A Circumstance can be realised by an 'adverbial group', a 'prepositional phrase', or even a 'nominal group' (Butt et al., 2000, p. 64). According to Butt et al. (2000), a Circumstance answers the following questions: 'where', 'when', 'how', 'why', 'with whom' and 'as what'. In this case, the circumstantial constituent 'this morning' in Table 1 above answers the question 'when'. Next is the explanation of the second dimension of ideational meaning.

The second dimension of ideational meaning comes into play when two or more clauses are structurally linked to form a 'clause complex' (Eggins, 2004, p. 255–6). Before proceeding with the explanation of the second dimension of ideational meaning, this subsection clarifies that in the present study, the term 'clause complex' is being used in the way defined by Butt et al. (2000, p. 30). That is, a clause complex can be one clause that stands by itself, defined as 'clause simplex' by Eggins (2004, p. 256), or it can be two or more clauses structurally linked. This definition is similar to the one used by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 371) who say that, 'in the analysis of a written text each sentence can be treated as one clause complex, with the "simple" (one clause) sentence as the

limiting case.’ For example, Text 2 below is made up of two ‘clause complexes’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 371). The first clause complex is made up of two clauses and the second clause complex is made up of only one clause. In the present study, the term ‘clause simplex’ is only used if the clause is part of a clause complex. Text 2 illustrates the structural linkage between clauses. The end of a clause is indicated by two vertical lines, and the end of a clause complex is indicated by three vertical lines, which is in line with conventions used by previous scholars (Butt et al., 2000; Eggins, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

Text 2

Maria, I have finished writing my essay || and need to submit it this
afternoon. ||| So, please proofread it now. |||

Structural linkages occur when paratactic conjunctions such as ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘or’, and ‘so’, or hypotactic conjunctions such as ‘as’, ‘because’, and ‘if’ are used to form ‘clause complexes’ (Eggins, 2004, p. 255; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 371). The clause simplexes in the first clause complex in Text 2 are paratactically linked by ‘and’.

Structural linkages contrast with cohesive linkages. That is, structural linkages join clauses within a clause complex, but cohesive linkages join two or more ‘clause complexes’ (Eggins, 2004, p. 279; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 538–9). For example, the linkage between the first and the second clause complex in Text 2 is cohesive whereas the linkage between the first and second clauses of the first clause complex is

structural. Cohesive linkages are made by cohesive conjunctions such as 'for example', 'furthermore', 'therefore' and 'however', but they can also be made by some structural conjunctions such as 'so', as happens in Text 2 above (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 539–540).

In summary, it can be hypothesised that if learners (particularly the learners in the target workplace) are helped to analyse ideational meaning in their texts, they may improve the readability of the texts. That is, when writing their texts, they will learn to respond to all possible questions their reader might have such as 'who', 'what', 'why', 'how', 'where', and 'when' (Butt et al., 2000, p. 63; Eggins, 2004, p. 159). Furthermore, learners will learn how to link clauses logically, so that their texts are understood without ambiguities.

2.7.2 Interpersonal meaning

Interpersonal meaning is analysed through the constituents that are labelled 'Subject', 'Finite', 'Predicator', 'Complement', and 'Adjunct' (Butt et al., 2000, p. 96; Eggins, 2004, p. 159; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 121). These constituents are first explained below and then a focus is made on the three dimensions that are taken into consideration in expressing interpersonal meaning (Eggins, 2004). Finally, the essence of the analysis of interpersonal meaning for the present study is elaborated upon.

The 'Subject' and 'Complement' are typically realised by nominal groups, and the 'Finite' and the 'Predicator' are realised by a verbal group. The

Finite is the first part of a verbal group and sometimes it is followed by an ‘auxiliary verb’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 336) (See Table 2 below). The ‘Adjunct’ is realised by a Circumstance. The four constituents can be identified in the structure of experiential meaning as illustrated in Table 2, which depicts the alignment between experiential and interpersonal meaning. The Circumstance is abbreviated as Circ.

Table 2: Illustration of alignments between interpersonal and experiential constituents

Clause	Maria	has	finished	proofreading	my essay	now
Interpersonal Analysis	Subject	Finite	Auxiliary Verb	Main Verb	Complement	Adjunct
			Predicator			
Experiential Analysis	Participant	Process			Participant	Circ.

In the structure of interpersonal meaning, two constituents are distinguishable, namely ‘MOOD’ and ‘RESIDUE’ (Table 3), and it is to the MOOD (the relationship between ‘Subject’ and ‘Finite’) that particular attention is drawn as it is here that the interactions are expressed (Eggins, 2004, p. 159). For example, the change from statement (giving information) to question (requesting information) in Table 2 above only alters the order of the Subject and the Finite, and the other constituents continue in their order: ***Maria has** finished proofreading my essay now* (giving information); ***Has Maria** finished proofreading my essay now?* (requesting information).

Table 3: Illustration of the fusion of Finite and Predicator

Maria	checked		my essay	this morning
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
MOOD			RESIDUE	

Sometimes the Finite is ‘fused’ with the Predicator and it becomes invisible (Eggins, 2004, p. 152; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 336). For

example, in the clause ‘Maria **checked** my essay this morning’, in Table 3 above, the Finite is fused with ‘checked’. Despite this fusion, ‘technically [the Finite] is still there in the clause’ (revealed through ‘-ed’), and it can also be revealed by adding a tag to the clause (Eggins, 2004, p. 152). For instance, *Maria checked my essay this morning, **didn’t she?*** Thus, from Eggins’ perspective, in that instance the Finite is ‘did’, and it can be illustrated in a table by placing the Main Verb between the terms ‘Finite’ and ‘Predicator’ (Table 3 above), meaning that the first half of the Main Verb is Finite and the last half is the Predicator (Butt et al., 2000, p. 92; Eggins, 2004, p. 153). Other explanations on the fusion of the Finite with the Predicator might be available in the literature, but for the present thesis, Eggins’ explanation gives a starting point for understanding the fused or invisible Finite.

The Finite expresses ‘tense’, ‘polarity’, and ‘modality’ (Eggins, 2004, p. 153). Tense can be present or past. For example, the Finite in Table 3 above expresses the past tense. Polarity can be ‘positive’ or ‘negative’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 143). For instance, Polarity in Table 3 is positive. Modality expresses probability, such as ‘perhaps’ and ‘maybe’; usuality, such as ‘usually’ and ‘sometimes’; obligation, such as ‘must’ and ‘should’; and inclination, such as ‘willingly’ and ‘happily’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 143). The manifestations of all those interpersonal expressions are usually grouped into ‘Modalisation’ and ‘Modulation’ (Eggins, 2004, p. 172; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 147). The Modalisation manifests itself through probability and usuality, and

Modulation manifests itself through obligation and inclination (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 147).

Some Adjuncts take part in the MOOD and express interpersonal meaning. These Adjuncts are called Mood Adjuncts, for example, 'polarity Adjuncts' (Eggins, 2004, p. 160). Other types of Adjuncts are 'Vocative Adjuncts' and 'Comment Adjuncts', which, according to Eggins (2004, p. 160), are neither part of MOOD nor part of RESIDUE since their meaning affects a clause as a whole.

Vocative Adjuncts refer to the forms of addressing people directly as happens in conversations and email correspondences, and comment Adjuncts express 'attitude and evaluation' (Eggins, 2004, p. 162). In the command 'Maria, proofread my essay', for example, 'Maria' is a Vocative Adjunct. In email correspondences, a Vocative can constitute a name only, or a name preceded by a cordial expression such as 'Dear', 'Hello/Hi', depending on the person being addressed. Comment Adjunct can be exemplified in the following sentence: *Maria **certainly** checked my essay.* The comment Adjunct 'certainly' could also be placed before 'Maria' as 'Comment Adjuncts typically occur in clause initial position, or directly after the subject [. . .]' (Eggins, 2004, p. 161).

As explained by Eggins (2004, p. 99–100), three dimensions are considered in expressing interpersonal meaning: power, contact and affective involvement. Power is equal if people interacting have the same social status such as friends. It is unequal if an interaction involves people of different status such as a boss and his or her subordinate. Contact is

frequent if people interacting meet on a regular basis, but it is infrequent if people interacting rarely meet. Affective involvement is high if people interacting are emotionally engaged such as lovers or spouses, but it is low if people interacting are only acquaintances (Eggins, 2004).

In summary, this subsection has clarified the constituents of the interpersonal meaning, which are particularly relevant to the present study as the study instructs and assesses learners' abilities to write an email to make a delicate request. A request can be accepted or rejected (Lee, 2004), but a delicate request is more prone to be rejected, so that the writer needs to be persuasive enough to have the request accepted. One of the strategies to persuade someone is the use of expressions of politeness (Harris, 2003), which can be done through modality.

2.7.3 Textual meaning

Textual meaning is analysed by keeping track of how a text is organised in order to guide a reader. To do that, the SFL genre tradition uses the following structure: Theme ^ Rheme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 64). Theme is the point of departure of a message, and it is what the message is about (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 64). Theme can be the beginning of a text as a whole (MacroTheme), it can be the beginning of a paragraph (HyperTheme), and it can be the beginning of a clause (Theme) (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 199). It follows then that a MacroTheme can be a paragraph, a HyperTheme can be a clause as a whole and a Theme is a constituent of a clause (placed in initial position). The Theme of a clause is

explained in detail in the following subsections as it is on this constituent that the present study mainly focuses for the analysis of textual meaning.

The Theme of a clause is next explained by focusing on its boundary with Rheme, its different classifications and its progressions. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), the boundary between Theme and Rheme is the first ideational constituent. More specifically, the last constituent of Theme should be a Participant, a Process, or a Circumstance (only one of these), which is called 'topical Theme' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 79). The following text (Text 3) illustrates this boundary in the first clause.

Text 3

This morning Maria proofread my essay, || and she sent it back to me. |||

In Text 3, 'Maria' is part of the Rheme in that 'This morning' is an ideational constituent, but this distinction of the boundary between Theme and Rheme is differently made by some researchers who suggest that the last constituent of Theme should directly precede the Finite (Berry, 1995, p. 64; Forey, 2002, p. 75; Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 190). To those researchers, therefore, 'Maria', in the first clause of Text 3 above, is part of the Theme, so that 'This morning' is a 'marked Theme' and 'Maria' is an 'unmarked Theme' (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 191–2).

The distinction between marked Theme and unmarked Theme is made by looking at the mood of a clause, that is, whether the clause is a statement, a question or a command (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). In a statement,

the unmarked Theme is realised by the Subject, in a question it is realised by the Finite or a question word such as ‘who’, and in a command it is realised by the Predicator. Otherwise, the Theme is marked, so in Text 3 above ‘This morning’ is marked Theme.

The consideration of *Maria* as part of the Theme in Text 3 is best captured by Davies (1997), who used the term ‘contextual frame’ to designate a marked Theme (cited in Forey, 2009, p. 152). According to Davies (1997), contextual frames such as ‘location’, ‘logical relations’ and ‘evaluation’ should be together with the Subject to form Theme in order to keep track of the writers’ moves within the text and the central participant, which is realised by the Subject (Forey, 2009, p. 153).

Another criterion for distinguishing the boundary between Theme and Rheme is to consider the whole first clause as the Theme. This criterion is used if two clauses are linked hypotactically, and the first clause is dependent (Eggins, 2004, p. 315) as is illustrated in Table 4 below. A dependent clause begins with a hypotactic conjunction such as indicating time or reason.

Table 4: Illustration of a hypotactic enhancing clause as Theme

Before Maria proofread my essay	I proofread it myself
Theme	Rheme

Besides being classified as topical and marked or unmarked, Theme is classified as textual and interpersonal. Textual Theme corresponds to what was explained above (Subsection 2.7.1) as a structural or a cohesive conjunction. Structural conjunctions such as ‘and’, ‘but’, ‘so’, ‘because’ and cohesive conjunctions such as ‘for example’, ‘therefore’ and ‘however’ (the

latter is Theme when used at the beginning of a clause) function as textual Themes, as seen in the second clause of Text 3 above: 'and she sent it (the essay) back to me.'

An interpersonal Theme can be a Finite in questions that are answered by starting with Yes or No as in the following example: *Has Maria proofread my essay?* The Finite 'Has' is an interpersonal Theme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 76). An interpersonal Theme is also represented by a number of Modal Adjuncts such as 'please' and 'kindly' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 82), as can be inserted in Text 1 above: 'Maria, please proofread my essay!' (*Maria* here is a vocative, which is also playing the role of an 'interpersonal' Theme (Eggins, 2004, p. 101).

Another constituent that can correspond to an interpersonal Theme is a projecting clause when acting as an evaluation 'contextual frame', as explained by Forey (2009, p. 153). A clause is projecting if it contains a verbal process such as 'say', or a mental process such as 'think' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 479), as mentioned above (Section 2.7.1). As explained by Forey (2009), a projecting clause can act as an interpersonal Theme when it is an evaluation contextual frame; that is, it allows a speaker (or writer) to begin a message with his or her own comment on the value of what to say. A projecting clause acting as interpersonal Theme is illustrated in Table 5 below, based on the example presented by Forey (2009, p. 154).

Table 5: Illustration of a projecting clause as interpersonal Theme

I envisaged that	Maria	Would proofread my essay
Interpersonal	Topical	
Theme		Rheme

From Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) perspective, the projection in Table 5 is different from the projection in which two clauses are paratactically linked (using a verbal process) or hypothetically linked (using a mental process), respectively exemplified as

Maria said || that she would proofread my essay ||| or

Maria thought || that my essay should be proofread |||.

The projection in Table 5 does not form two clauses; it forms only one clause in which the clause *that she would proofread my essay* is an 'embedded clause', that is, it is a clause that functions within another clause, as part of a constituent of this clause (Butt et al., 2000, p. p.168). Thus the clause in Table 5 can be rewritten as

I envisaged the fact [[that Maria would proofread my essay]]

and could be experientially analysed as

Participant: I

Process: envisaged

Participant: the fact [[that Maria would proofread my essay]]

In fact, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 482) suggest that, the clause *I envisaged* in Table 5 is not projecting the clause *that Maria would proofread my essay* because this clause 'comes ready-made as projection, rather than being turned into one by the process of [envisaging]'. Thus, Forey's

(2009) reason for including the clause ‘I envisage that’ in the analysis of projecting clauses could appear unclear.

However, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 482) state that the projections in which the projected constituent comes ready-made happen ‘when a proposition is an object of emotion: when the fact that . . . is a source of pleasure, displeasure, fear, surprise, amusement, interest or some other emotion’. Since Forey (2009) analysed projecting clauses as evaluation contextual frames, therefore, her inclusion of the clause ‘I envisaged that’ in the analysis becomes clear.

Before proceeding to the last classification of Theme, this subsection illustrates the ‘multiple Theme’ (Table 6 below) that can occur in a clause as presented by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 81).

Table 6: Illustration of textual, interpersonal and topical Themes

<i>well</i>	<i>surely</i>	<i>Maria</i>	<i>sent my essay back to me after she had proofread it.</i>
Textual	Interpersonal	Topical	
Theme			Rheme

The last classification of Theme is into ‘informational’ and ‘interactional’ Themes (Brown & Yule, 1983, in Berry, 1995, p. 58). According to Brown and Yule (1983), informational Theme is most frequently chosen in written texts and is used to provide information. By contrast, interactional Theme is most frequently chosen in spoken language and is most frequently represented by the personal pronouns ‘I’ and ‘you’; it is used to establish rapport. The term ‘impersonal’, used by Martin (1986) (cited in Berry, 1995, p. 59) when referring to advantages and disadvantages of each Theme type, helps to clarify the distinction between informational and

interpersonal Themes by using the following two examples (Themes emboldened).

1. **Proofreading my essay** was the promise you made this morning.
2. **You** promised to proofread my essay this morning.

While the Theme in the first example is impersonal and information oriented, the Theme in the second example is personal (interactional Theme). According to Martin (1986) (cited in Berry, 1995, p. 59), a reader can understand the purpose of a text only reading the informational Themes of the text. But it should be emphasised here that Martin's recommendation of the choice of Theme depends on the text being written. In other words, while some texts will require the choice of interactional Theme, others will require the choice of informational Theme or the mixture of interactional and informational Themes (Berry, 1995). In summary, the classification into informational and interactional Themes suggests that, in Halliday's classification of Theme, a topical Theme can be either informational or interactional, and the Themes can be chosen based on the type of text being written.

Thematic progression indicates the different ways a text develops from the first Theme and Rheme of a text. Three basic patterns of thematic progression have been put forward by Daneš (1974) as described by Fries (1995) and Moore (2006). The first pattern is 'Linear thematic progression' (Fries, 1995, p. 7–8; Moore, 2006, p. 47). In this pattern, the Theme of the second clause comes from the Rheme of the first clause; the Theme of the third clause comes from the Rheme of the second clause and so on. This

pattern of thematic progression is also named 'zig-zag' (Eggins, 2004, p. 234).

The second pattern of thematic progression is 'Theme iteration' and the third pattern is 'derived Theme' (Fries, 1995, p. 7–8; Moore, 2006, p. 47). In Theme iteration, the successive clauses share the Themes of the first clause. In the derived Theme, the Themes of the successive clauses appertain to the general topic that is being dealt with in a text (Fries, 1995, p. 58). As was stated by Butt et al. (2000, p. 151) and Moore (2006, p. 47), the three patterns of thematic progression described here can be used together in a text in order to render a text cohesive and easy to read.

The Theme/Rheme structure (the system of Theme) characterises a text as a message, and in parallel with that system is the system of information. The constituents of the system of information are labelled 'Given' and 'New' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 93; Moore, 2006, p. 46). Given is the information already known by the reader or listener, and New is the information that the reader or listener needs to learn. In a typical structuring of clauses, Theme coincides with Given, and Rheme coincides with New (Moore, 2006, p. 46). This coincidence has implications for thematic progression. That is to say, a Theme is considered as indicating progression if it coincides with Given, and according to Moore (2006, p. 46), the coincidence can maximise the readability of a text.

The analysis of textual meaning, particularly Theme, is relevant for the present study, given the nature of communication in the workplace, in

which readers have to read a large number of texts on a daily basis. In order to be able to cope with all the texts they receive, therefore, readers need to be helped, and the help comes from the writer. That is to say, writers need to make their texts cohesive, and one of the resources they can use is the ability to handle Theme. As stated above, Martin (1986) (in Berry, 1995, p. 59) hypothesised that informational Theme might maximise readability or the flow of information and interactional Theme might boost rapport.

Based on that hypothesis, the present study explores the use of informational Theme and thematic progression in order to assess whether they help learners to improve the readability of their texts in the target workplace. The study uses the term 'thematic choice' when exploring the notion of informational Theme, and it uses the terms 'thematic progression' when exploring the notions of 'Theme iteration', 'linear Theme' and so on (Fries, 1995, p. 7–8; Moore, 2006, p. 47).

In summary, all the analyses clarified and explained so far are aimed at providing background information on the analyses that are later carried out in the present study, from genre level to linguistic level. The analyses at genre and linguistic levels are first started as an exploration of the target learners' strengths and weaknesses, so that a pedagogical intervention in the form of an experiment is carried out to address the weaknesses. As the experiment is carried out on the basis of the SFL genre pedagogy, the pedagogy is described and discussed in the next section.

2.8 SFL genre pedagogy

SFL genre pedagogy is initially described as having three stages (Callaghan, Knapp & Noble, 2012, p. 180) and then as having five stages (Hyland, 2007, p. 159). In yet another description, it is described as having four stages (Yasuda, 2011, p. 116). The descriptions are explained and compared in the subsections that follow, and a conclusion is drawn that all the descriptions can be used to help learners with their learning of a genre. Finally, the description on which the present study draws is provided.

The three stages described by Callaghan et al. (2012, p. 180) are as follows: 'modelling', 'joint negotiation' and 'independent construction'. Modelling introduces the context; that is, it helps learners to understand the social purpose of the text and the variation of language as a result of 'field', 'tenor', and 'mode' (Halliday, 2007 [1975], p. 134). Modelling also helps learners understand the moves in a text and the linguistic realisations in the text.

The joint negotiation is followed by independent construction and allows a teacher and learners to construct an instance of the genre together. In the joint negotiation, the teacher acts as a scribe, and the learners contribute ideas. To maximise contributions, the teacher asks students as many questions as possible.

In independent construction, learners construct an instance of the genre on their own, and the teacher monitors the learners' engagement in the

construction (Callaghan et al., 2012, p. 180). Learners can work individually, or they can work in groups. Working in groups could appear to be another joint negotiation (working together). However, the independence here is in relation to the teacher, in the sense that a situation depicts learner-learner support, 'shared consciousness', as opposed to the situation in which teacher-learner support is enacted, 'borrowed consciousness' (Yayli, 2011, p.123). In fact, in her study in which she used the three stages described by Callaghan et al. (2012), Burns (2001) had learners work in groups in the independent construction stage.

Callaghan et al. (2012) suggested that a last stage could be used in which students worked outside the frame of the genre in which they were instructed. According to Callaghan et al. (2012, p. 182), the last stage incentivises creativity and allows learners to understand how aspects of a genre affect communication in different social contexts.

Following are the five stages described by Hyland (2007, p. 159):

1. Setting the context: this stage points out to learners the purpose of the text and the variation of language with audience.
2. Modelling: this stage analyses the genre exemplars, moves and linguistic features.
3. Joint construction: this stage is a teacher-guided practice in which a teacher and learners construct an instance of the genre; learners contribute ideas, and the teacher serves as a scribe.

4. Independent construction: in this stage, learners independently construct an instance of the genre, and the teacher monitors the progress of the construction.
5. Comparing: in this stage learners compare the genre they have learned with other genres in order to understand how genres work in achieving particular social purposes.

The four stages used by Yasuda (2011, p. 116) are 'task input', 'pedagogic task', 'target task', and 'task follow-up', in which a teacher and learners are involved in the process of teaching and learning. In task input, the teacher presents instructional texts and learners may answer comprehension questions about (a) the topic (field), (b) the relationship between a writer and a reader (tenor), and (c) the mode dimension (whether a text is written or spoken) (Butt et al., 2000, p. 5). In the pedagogic task, the teacher helps learners to learn the moves and the linguistic features that realise the moves.

Within the linguistic features, learners may be helped to (a) break a text into clauses, (b) analyse clause boundaries, (c) break clauses into groups and (d) analyse different linguistic choices made in a text. In the target task, the teacher helps learners to demonstrate knowledge they gained while working in the pedagogical task, and in the follow-up task the teacher, together with the learners, reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of the material used in the instruction. Such a reflection helps decide what needs to be improved in subsequent instructions.

A close comparison of the three descriptions indicates that the stages are similar. More clearly, Stages 1 and 2 in Hyland's description are only one in the description made by Callaghan et al. Similarly, Stage 5 in Hyland's description corresponds to the final stage suggested by Callaghan et al. Regarding Yasuda's stages, 'task input' corresponds to 'modelling', 'pedagogic task' corresponds to 'joint negotiation' and 'target task' corresponds to 'independent construction'. What appears different from Yasuda's stages is the 'follow-up task'. However, the follow-up task can be accomplished in the fourth stage by Callaghan et al. (2012, p. 180) and in the fifth stage by Hyland (2007, p. 159). Therefore, any of the descriptions can be used in helping learners with their explicit learning of a genre, as a matter of choice. In fact, the present study used the stages described by Yasuda in the pilot phase, but it used the stages described by Hyland in the main phase, with the exception of the fifth stages, as will be clarified in the methodology chapter.

The choice of the stages described by Hyland may appear to be a contradiction to the use of the SFL pedagogy as Hyland is said to be 'representing the ESP School' (Johns, 2011, p. 63). However, Hyland has adapted and modified the stages conceived by the SFL genre tradition, so that the use of his stages is still within the SFL pedagogy.

For classroom implementation, the use of the SFL genre pedagogy incorporates the notion of 'task' (Yasuda, 2011, p. 112), which also resonates with researchers in the ESP genre tradition. Therefore, before

the present chapter moves on, a definition of the term ‘task’ is presented in the next section to clarify how the term is used in the present thesis.

2.9 Definition of ‘task’

For teaching purposes, tasks are believed to provide learners with linguistic knowledge and opportunities for making meanings that are appropriate to given contexts (Beglar & Hunt, 2002, p. 97; Yasuda, 2011, p. 113). Despite this belief, the way ‘task’ should be defined has created a tension in the literature (Swales, 1990, p. 74–5). Breen (1987) defined ‘task’ as work plans that have overall purposes of facilitating language learning, from simple and brief exercises to more complex activities. Swales (1990) argued against that definition by saying that if simple and brief exercises were only carried out to learn language rather than accomplish real tasks, then they did not meet criteria for tasks. Thus this tension suggests that the term ‘task’ should be defined if its meaning is to be understood in the present thesis.

Swales (1990, p. 74) agreed with the definition of ‘task’ as differentiated, sequenceable, problem-posing, jointly constructed and occurring in social milieu (Candlin, 1987). However, he disagreed with its definition as ‘problem-posing’, ‘jointly constructed’ and ‘occurring in social milieu’ (Swales, 1990, p. 74). Swales’ reservation about ‘problem-posing’ appears to refer to tasks in which students are given texts that have information gaps. That is, two students are given the same text, so that the information missing in one text is found in the other text; students complete the gaps by asking questions and obtaining answers from each

other. About those tasks, Swales (1990, p. 75) argued that if students were provided with questions to answer, together with relevant information to provide the answers, then the tasks did not pose any problems. To Swales (1990), then, problem solving should not be a condition for defining 'task'; according to him, the condition for defining 'task' should be goal-oriented.

Regarding the definition of 'task' as 'jointly constructed', Swales (1990, p. 76) argued that a teacher could sometimes take a unilateral decision on the direction of a task. This unilateral decision could happen when a task sequence appeared to be going wrong, and the teacher saw a need for it to be right. Furthermore, learners could be engaged in their tasks even when on an individual basis, particularly when they were out of the classroom, in their homes for example. Thus, Swales (1990) suggested that the term 'jointly constructed' was not suitable for defining 'task'.

The reservation about 'social milieu' by Swales (1990, p. 76) concerns the ambiguity of the term "social". He wondered whether the term meant socialising in a classroom where situations were simulated or it meant that goals were to be constructed in an actual environment or in both classroom and in actual situations.

Swales (1990, p. 76) defined 'task' as 'one of a set of differentiated, sequenceable goal-directed activities' that could facilitate the learning of genres belonging to a given context, and in this case a task could take place in a classroom or out of it. The definition by Swales is used in the

present thesis in that not only did the study engage learners in the classroom, but also out of it.

All of the processes of explicit-genre teaching explained, analysed and discussed thus far have the collection of texts as a starting point. Texts are collected based on learner needs, so that a teacher's understanding of the needs provides him or her with a basis for helping learners with the knowledge they need for their study or work context. When texts are collected and analysed from genre, register and linguistic level perspectives, they are taken to a classroom where learners are instructed as has been done by a number of previous researchers (Parks, 2001; Firkins et al., 2007; Myskow & Gordon, 2010; Ho, 2009; Yayli, 2011; Chen & Su, 2012).

With a view to providing an understanding of the necessity of analysing genres in different contexts and the relevance of genre analyses, the next sections discuss some genre analyses that have been undertaken thus far. Then, the discussion of genre analyses is extended to classroom practices in which learners are helped to write their texts.

2.10 Genre identification and analysis

Genres are identified and analysed in order to help learners/students with the text types they need to write in a given context (Hyland, 2007). That is to say, text types are identified and analysed to find out about their moves, linguistic features and the reason for choosing the linguistic features in a context of genre use (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Martin, 2012). Genre

identification and analysis have been widely carried out in the literature (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Santos, 2002; Flowerdew & Wan, 2006; Sadeghi & Samuel, 2013). However, this chapter will indicate that identifying and analysing genres is a continuous process, so that for each context of language use, identification and analysis of genres should be carried out rather than simply relying on the analysis from previous studies.

An example of the need to identify and analyse genres for each context of language use can be seen in the studies conducted by Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010) and Evans (2012). Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010) compared the writing taught in three institutions of higher-education and the writing practised in six workplaces in South Africa, and they found that probationary trainees from the institutions of higher-education were always required to have their writing 100 per cent accurate in terms of grammar when engaged in the workplaces.

By contrast, in the study by Evans (2012), in which 50 email messages were analysed and the writers of the emails were interviewed, workplace professionals in a Hong Kong industry were found not to be very concerned with grammatical accuracy (details of Evans' study are provided later in the present chapter). They were only concerned with grammatical accuracy when communicating with members who were external to their work context. In the study conducted by Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010, p. 242), employees had to be grammatically accurate 'in all business correspondence'. In other words, they had to be grammatically

accurate when writing either for people inside or outside their workplace. Thus text types of particular contexts should be analysed if they are to be taught in accordance with the requirements of a given context.

Another point that can be made regarding the need to always analyse text types within a particular context is the need to prioritise some text types in teaching. Prioritising might be particularly relevant in that a context of language use sometimes has a variety of text types, which may be difficult to teach on a course. For example, in their interviews with lecturers of the institutions of higher-education, Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010) found that the lecturers had made a lot of efforts to teach knowledge that learners needed for their workplaces, but the documents in the workplaces were so diverse that it was difficult to teach them all. As a result, learners who were employed for a 6-month probationary period were unable to write a number of workplace documents. Some learners improved their writing as the time of exposure to the workplace increased, but a number of them were not able to cope with the workplace writing demands (Hollis-Turner and Scholtz, 2010, p. 243).

Regarding the learners' outcomes in the workplace, Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010, p. 244) contended that the learners' difficulties might have been attributable to the following problems: failure to teach all the workplace texts on the part of the lecturers, the discrepancy in assessing success in the institutions of higher-education and the workplaces, and the way writing was taught in the institutions of higher education. Regarding the discrepancy in the assessments, Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010,

p. 242) pointed out that while in the institutions of higher education learners were allowed to succeed with a minimum grade of 50 per cent, in the workplace they were required to always be 100 per cent correct in what they wrote. Concerning the way teaching was done in the institutions of higher-education, Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010, p. 244) pointed out that the texts were decontextualised and simplified for learning purposes while the writing in the workplaces was always contextualised.

While the learners' difficulties in the workplace might have been attributable to the elements mentioned above by Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010), they might also have been attributable to the fact that the texts most frequently used were not investigated and prioritised in classroom teaching. For example, Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010, p. 241) found that lecturers helped learners with checking the accuracy of their written work and did some ethnographic work such as attending the staff workshops of the workplaces. The lecturers aimed at being informed of what was current. However, the type of accuracy with which learners were helped is not clarified. Furthermore, it is not clear whether that accuracy is what was valued in the workplaces, particularly by the 'workplace writing success' evaluators such as senior employees holding leadership roles. Investigating the text types that were required in the workplace and the language features that were valued in the texts might have helped to bridge the gap between writing in the higher institutions and writing in the workplaces. The next section discusses genre analysis and teaching in more detail.

2.11 Genre analysis and teaching

A number of studies have used genre analyses in recent years in an attempt to familiarise learners with moves and linguistic features in a genre, and the results have provided benefits for learners and teachers (Henry & Roseberry, 1998; Burns, 2001; Chen & Su, 2012). However, further investigation of the effects of genre analysis and teaching are still needed in different contexts, particularly in the context of the target workplace, as the studies in the present chapter will indicate.

In a pre-test and post-test study design that explored the learning of a tourist information text, Henry and Roseberry (1998, p. 153) helped 34 first year university students in Brunei to learn obligatory and optional moves and the linguistic features, which were assessed under the term 'texture index'. Students were organised into a genre group and a nongenre group (an experimental and a control group respectively), and were supported with a 'motivation index', which was assessed by the lecturers in the 'Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics' to determine how well the students motivated tourists to visit Brunei in their texts (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 150). To determine how well the students learned to organise moves, Henry and Roseberry (1998, p. 151) used the following formula: $Move\ score = \frac{MP - 0.5(IM + MM)}{OM}$, where MP is the number of obligatory moves a student has used, IM is the number of inappropriate moves, MM is the number of misplaced moves, and OM is the number of obligatory moves in the target genre. The comparison of the scores the students had in the pre-test and the ones they had in the post-test

revealed that students in the genre group were successful in the measures of motivation and texture indexes whereas the students in the nongenre group succeeded in none of the measures.

Although the students in the genre group indicated no success with the measure of moves, the fact that they were successful with the motivation and texture indexes led Henry and Roseberry (1998, p. 154) to conclude that 'awareness of generic structure of the text' was helpful for the students to effectively write their texts. Similar conclusions were drawn by Burns (2001), who helped a group of adult immigrant learners in Australia to write a job application letter, and Chen and Su (2012), who assessed the effectiveness of a genre-based approach in teaching summary writing to a group of 41 university students in Taiwan.

Details of the studies by Burns (2001) and Su (2012) can be given as follows. In the study by Burns (2001), learners were guided through the stages of modelling, joint negotiation and independent construction to identify moves and linguistic features such as the predominance of the present tense and the use of clauses of being and having. At the end of the instruction learners wrote a text that conformed to the instructional genre, as was qualitatively assessed by the researcher (Burns, 2001, p. 206–7). In the study by Chen and Su (2012, p. 188), students were supported with the 'content' of a narrative text, its 'organization' (moves) and linguistic features, which were termed 'vocabulary' and 'language use.' Assessment of these components in the summaries written by students in the pre-test and post-test revealed that while the students were

overall successful, they were more successful with content and organisation than with vocabulary and language use.

Put together, the studies above quite clearly indicate that genre analysis and teaching can be a useful tool for equipping learners with writing strategies that can lead them to success. Learners can effectively organise the moves in their texts, and they can summarise information so that the reading is facilitated. This last benefit might be particularly relevant to workplace readers, who may have a busy schedule that leaves them with very little time.

However, the studies above and the ones presented next need to be investigated further for a number of reasons. The first reason is that genre analysis is strongly linked to 'social context' (Callaghan et al., 2012, p. 180), which incorporates the consumers of the genre being taught. The views of the consumers can constitute a strong element in shaping the teaching methodology as they can enable a teacher to help learners be acquainted with the knowledge that the readers of their texts expect. For example, to learn how well a learner has motivated a tourist to visit a town, a teacher should have the learner's text assessed by a tourist to determine how much the tourist would feel inclined to visit the town after reading the text, rather than having the text being assessed by lectures. This point is supported by Forey (2004, p. 465), who suggested that the incorporation of business people's voices in workplace genre analysis should be an effort to consider in future studies. The point is further supported by the study conducted by Parks (2001).

More specifically, Forey (2004) investigated whether two workplace texts (Memo A and Memo B) would be interpreted differently by 12 business people and 15 teachers of English as a foreign language in Hong Kong. The two workplace texts had the same communicative purpose but were written differently in terms of thematic choices and formatting. That is to say, Memo A was predominantly written with 'I' and 'you' in thematic positions whereas Memo B was written with institutional entities in thematic positions. Regarding formatting, Memo A was written in prose or full clauses, and Memo B was written in bullet points.

In a 2-phase focus group, business people and teachers discussed the meanings the two texts construed, and from the discussion, Forey (2004, p. 447) found that the business people and the teachers had different interpretations. More clearly, the first phase of the discussion indicated that most business people were in favour of Memo A whereas the teachers were in favour of Memo B. In the second phase of the discussion, after the focus groups had been given time to closely analyse the linguistic features of the two workplace texts, most business people and teachers agreed that Memo B was more positive than Memo A in terms of maintaining rapport between the writer and the reader. According to Forey (2004), business people appeared to change their views because of the HyperTheme, which will be explained below. When referring to the formatting of the two texts, both the business people and teachers agreed that Memo B was preferable for workplace communication.

Based on the ways the two texts were written, Forey concluded that the different interpretations were attributable to the choices of Theme. Firstly, the way the HyperTheme (Theme of the first paragraph) in each text was written played a role. That is, while in Memo A the HyperTheme appeared to express anger, as spotted by the participants in the focus groups (Forey, 2004, p. 457), Memo B started more positively by drawing readers' attention to an appropriate procedure. Secondly, the choices of 'I' and 'you' in thematic positions, as well as the combination of 'you should', were first seen by business people as a way of being close to the reader while it was seen by teachers as a personal attack in which the reader was explicitly considered as wrong. All the interpretations made by the focus groups prompted Forey (2004, p. 450) to believe that 'an understanding of the way in which Theme works can be usefully incorporated into pedagogy' for teaching workplace writing. Forey (2004) particularly suggested that the incorporation of business people's voices in the analysis of workplace texts for teaching purposes should be an endeavour of future studies.

Parks (2001) trained 11 newly employed francophone nurses on how to write nursing care plans in Quebec. As implied from Parks' study, nursing care plans are records that nurses write on the needs and development of patients in hospitals. After investigating the textual features of the nursing care plans, with the support of an experienced nurse, Parks trained the newly employed nurses to write such nursing care plans. After the training had ended, the newly employed nurses went to work as interns in francophone hospitals and found out that staff nurses there resisted the

use of nursing care plans. This finding, therefore, suggested that the teaching of the nursing care plans 'primarily remained a school task' (Parks, 2001, p. 414).

The study by Forey (2004) and the one by Parks (2001) yield two relevant insights into genre analysis and teaching. The first insight is that if business people are not consulted in analysing a genre, problems might emerge in teaching the genre. That is, the teaching will only be done based on the teacher's belief. If the teachers and the business writing evaluators in a workplace have discrepant beliefs as to what constitutes successful writing, then learners will be doomed to failure when they get engaged in their prospective job, as probably happened in the study conducted by Hollis-Turner and Scholtz (2010, p. 243) and the one conducted by Parks (2001, p. 414). In Parks' study, an experienced nurse was involved in the teaching of the nursing care plans, but it appears that more insights needed to be gained from the users of the nursing care plans in the workplace. Launching a survey to more nurses in the hospitals, for example, might have provided insights into what documents are preferred in the workplace and then those documents could be used to help the newly employed francophone nurses accordingly.

The second insight resides in the fact that an understanding of the reasons for the preferences as to how a text should make meaning requires analysing linguistic meanings. For example, it was through analysing the linguistic realisations of Memo A and Memo B that

Forey (2004) was able to find the reason for the different interpretations between business people and teachers.

The second reason for conducting further genre analysis is that there is a need to combine analysis of texts and the practices involved in the writing of the texts (Gardner, 2012), or the reasons for the way texts are written in a particular context, as the studies by Flowerdew and Wan (2010) and Bhatia (2008) will indicate. Flowerdew and Wan (2010) studied how audit reports were written by observing the writers writing, interviewing them and then analysing the audit reports in terms of moves and linguistic features. They found that while writing the audit reports, the auditors were involved in a dynamic environment in which they used different modes of communication such as speaking and writing at the same time and used phones and email communication. Furthermore, they found that although the auditors were expected to use templates and only make changes based on the findings from the audit, their writing situation compelled them to include 'original writing' in the audit reports (Flowerdew & Wan, 2010, p. 88). That is, they created new forms rather than simply completing the templates.

Regarding the study by Bhatia (2008), two scenarios requiring a combination of texts and situation analyses were reported. In the first scenario, in which documentations and arbitration practices were analysed, Bhatia (2008) found that after the arbitration process was complete, agreements between parties had more force than the rules stated in the arbitration documents. The second scenario entailed analysis

of 'corporate disclosure documents based on 15 Hong Kong Stock Exchange listed companies', in which Bhatia (2008, p.156) found that two genres were combined in a document that reported on a corporation bankruptcy for different purposes. One purpose for the combination of the two genres was to accurately present information as required by the conventions of the genre and another purpose was to strategically deviate from the conventions of the genre in order to maintain the good image of the corporation. To Bhatia (2008), understanding of the phenomenon in these two scenarios would be difficult to achieve by merely looking at the texts. In other words, Bhatia (2008, p. 171) suggested that there should be 'a greater integration of text-internal and text-external factors that influence and contribute to the construction, interpretation and exploitation of genres [. . .].'

In short, the first two reasons for conducting the studies reviewed so far further suggest that prior to teaching a genre, a teacher should consider the voice of the reader in order to learn about expectations of what facilitates reading, or what texts features are valued. Doing that would help a writer to produce a text with the reader in mind, and it would help a teacher to carry out teaching with the user of the texts in mind and avoid pitfalls such as the one seen in the study by Parks (2001).

Furthermore, the teacher should consider the writer in order to learn about the processes involved in the writing of the texts so that the teacher can find the best possible way to provide support. An example is seen in the last finding by Flowerdew and Wan (2010) in which learners did original

writing rather than simply using the templates as they were expected to do. That finding suggests that learners would face difficulties in writing an audit report if they were only taught based on the contextual analysis understood from the texts. That is, more effective teaching would probably require an additional analysis that entails observing what goes on when a text is constructed, a point that resonates with Gardner (2012).

The third reason for conducting the studies above further is the lack of a satisfactory control variable in assessing the effects of a genre-based approach. As was stated in the introduction to the present thesis, genre-based approaches can be divided into two facets: explicit genre-based approach, which is represented by the SFL and ESP traditions, and the implicit genre-based approach, which is represented by the NRS tradition (Flowerdew & Wan, 2010, p. 80). These two facets of genre-based teaching constitute opposite approaches and therefore a suggestion is made in the present study that the two approaches should serve as a control of each other. That is to say, when assessing the effect of an explicit genre-based approach, a researcher should use an implicit genre-based approach as a control variable to ensure the result achieved is attributable to the explicit genre-based approach and vice versa.

Of the studies summarised above, an exception in terms of using a control variable could be given to the study conducted by Henry and Roseberry (1998) as the study used a genre group and a nongenre group of learners when assessing the effect of an explicit genre-based approach. However, the distinction between the two groups in the study by Henry and

Roseberry was not totally made in terms explicitness and implicitness as the learners in both groups were explicitly helped with the linguistic forms; the only apparent distinction was in terms of generic forms. For example, Henry and Roseberry (1998, p. 152) stated that by using the same authentic texts used with the genre group, 'grammar was taught through discussion of which tense, adjectives, [and] collocations [. . .] should or could be used in the various exercises and in the students' own writing.' Thus, studies using a more implicit genre group, preferably one that is only engaged on the job or study, may provide a sounder conclusion on the effect of an explicit genre-based approach.

The fourth reason for doing further study on genre analysis and teaching, particularly in the written mode, is that written communication appears now to be mostly exchanged through email, but the use of genres exchanged through email appears to be given little attention in the literature (Evans, 2012, p. 202). Attempts have been made to analyse email genres, as will be seen in the discussion of the studies that follow, but a focus on specific email genres in the context of a workplace appears to be under researched.

Evans (2012) investigated the nature of email communication undertaken by professionals in Hong Kong service industries with a view to providing an empirical basis for the design of advanced-level courses and materials in Business English. By using interviews and case studies, Evans (2012, p. 205) found that the professionals mostly communicated through email messages, and their writing of the email messages was mixed with

telephone conversations. That is, professionals first discussed the topics of their email messages and only then did they write them down. They also followed their email messages up with telephone calls to ensure information was accurate. From the interviews, professionals were found to be concerned with grammatical accuracy when communicating with members who were external to their organisation, but they were less careful when establishing internal communication (Evans, 2012, p. 206). This finding was substantiated by analysing email chains, which also revealed that the email messages were (a) short, (b) less conformant to the 'opening, body, closing' that were thought to characterise business correspondence, and (c) collaborative in nature, collaboration being that more than one person contributed to the email chains (Evans, 2012, p. 207–9).

Based on the findings, Evans (2012) concluded that the handling of email messages should be an inherent part of business English courses. Regarding the mixture of different modes in handling email messages, Evans (2012) suggested that simulated email tasks in which learners worked in collaboration and were helped with listening, speaking, reading and writing should be used to bridge the gap that appeared to separate the teaching in the classroom and the practices that actually happened in workplaces.

Similar studies were conducted by Gimenez (2006), and Marques (2008). In the study by Gimenez (2006), 52 embedded email messages were analysed to discuss the textual features that characterised the exigencies

of communication demands in carrying out international business. By embedded emails, Gimenez (2006, p. 159) meant the joint of several email messages that worked together to make complete sense; embedding was started by a main email message, followed by a series of other subordinate email messages and was ended by the main email message. A close analysis of the embedded email messages revealed an extensive use of carbon copy (CC) to promote accountability, as well as the use of Re (for 'reference') and the use of FW (for 'forward'). Furthermore, embedded emails were used as 'corporate internal records' of decisions made and the process involved in making decision (Gimenez, 2006, p. 159). Another finding was that several email messages made reference to conference calls and exhibited 'intertextuality' and 'hypertextuality', that is, reference was respectively made to previous texts and to internet links to which readers could have access for further information (Gimenez, 2006, p. 165).

Although the findings by Gimenez are not discussed from the perspective of teaching practice, as happens in the studies by Evans (2012) above and Marques (2008) below, reference to them here is necessary as they shed some light on genre analysis. That is, the fact that the textual features observed in the study by Gimenez (2006) resulted from the changes of communication mediums such as memorandums and letters to email (Evans, 2012) constitute an important point that learners need to know when using a genre.

In the study by Marques (2008), 210 email messages that were written to three different teachers holding different roles at the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria in Portugal were analysed. Analysis was aimed at understanding the characteristics of language used, the manifestation of spoken and written modes in the email messages (requests) written by undergraduate students, and finding a basis for helping the students with their internet communication. The findings revealed that most students maintained 'a formal interpersonal distance' when communicating with different teachers, as was seen in the 'closing' move on the one hand (Marques, 2008, p. 572). On the other end, as was noticed in the 'salutation' move, the students' email messages were mostly found to (a) request immediate response, (b) be context dependent, and (c) be of low lexical density; furthermore, the students mostly used 'I' in the subject position and used material processes; thus Marques (2008, p. 574) concluded that communication through email messages was made 'in general continuum between spoken and written language', a point that was also highlighted by Vinagre (2005) and Yasuda (2011). To Marques (2008), learners needed to be familiar with such a continuum in classroom teaching if they were to be efficient with their internet communication.

The studies on email genres provide some insights that can be harnessed in teaching learners who communicate through the medium of email on a daily basis. For example, the fact that writing email genres involves telephone conversations and that this combination of modes is relevant for the achievement of a communicative purpose (Marques, 2008; Evans, 2012) needs to be highlighted. Other relevant facts that need to be

highlighted in teaching email genres are the dimensions that email facilities such as 'carbon copy' and 'forward' have gained in enhancing accountability and recording the processes through which a message goes in achieving a communicative purpose (Gimenez, 2006).

While all these facts are relevant, the studies in which they were highlighted tended to focus on general email messages. It is suggested in the present study that an explicit focus on a specific genre that is exchanged through email may enhance learners' understanding of genre and linguistic level analyses, which may serve as tools for immediate and further development, that is, after formal learning has ended. In fact, in his study in which learners were taught the moves and linguistic features of a specific genre (research article), Cheng (2007) found that a learner was able to use the features of the genre taught in his writing. Furthermore, the learner indicated 'recontextualization' of his genre knowledge, recontextualization being the 'abilities not only to use a certain generic feature in a new writing task, but to use it with a keen awareness of the rhetorical context that facilitates its appropriate use' (Cheng, 2007, p. 303). Similarly, in her study in which she focused on specific genres when working with six learners, Yayli (2011, p. 124) found that after being taught the moves and linguistic features of genres, the learners were able to use features of one genre when engaged in a different genre.

Although the studies conducted by Cheng (2007) and Yayli (2011) did not focus on email messages, their studies shed some light on the fact that if learners are guided through the moves and linguistic features of a specific

genre, they might succeed with their immediate and future writing endeavours. An attempt to look at moves in an email genre was made by Marques (2008), who only analysed the 'salutation' and 'closing' in the students' email messages that were sent to different teachers. While analysis of those two moves gave some insights into how learners used language, investigation of more moves of the emails might have provided further insights into the knowledge the learners had and the aspects with which they needed support when carrying out their internet communication.

A move that may require particular attention, for example, is the subject line as it is the first part the reader sees before opening the email and therefore it may enhance the achievement of a communicative purpose in the workplace. In fact, it has been stated that 'if the email is not opened by the recipient, the content of the e-mail [. . .] can have no effect (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005, p. 381). Porter and Whitcomb (2005) investigated the effectiveness of email subject line in survey responses and found that surveys with subject lines had fewer respondents than surveys without a subject line. With that result, Porter and Whitcomb (2005, p. 385) concluded that 'survey response rates [might] not be an optimal measure for testing the effectiveness of e-mail subject lines.' However, for the daily workplace communication, an inclusion of a subject line and the awareness of its relevance may help a writer to achieve his or her communicative purpose, as has been highlighted by several researchers (Kent & Brandal, 2003; Trouteaud, 2004; PTRResource, 2014).

Another point that can be made about the studies analysing email genres is that they have been limited to the search for learner needs and discussion of implications for teaching practice. It may be necessary, however, to see the extent to which the teaching methodology suggested might work in a particular context of genre analysis. Thus future studies might find it relevant to do both analysis and implementation of teaching practice.

As was stated at the beginning of the present section, genres have been analysed from the perspective of moves and linguistic features, and the results have been beneficial for teachers and learners in the process of teaching practice. Learners are helped with the knowledge they need for their immediate or envisaged context, so that they see a connection between classroom activities and the activities performed in the workplace. Similarly, teachers' work is facilitated as they know what their students need to learn and plan accordingly. In the following subsections, studies focusing on linguistic features, namely the notion of 'Theme' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 64), are discussed with the view to revealing how they inform the present study and how they could be extended to the context of the present study. In other words, additional reasons for conducting the studies further are indicated.

The ability to choose Theme is recognised as relevant to making a text cohesive and easy to read (Butt et al., 2000). In a study conducted by Thompson (2005), Theme was used as a criterion to compare the performance of two groups of children in producing a narrative text. The

first group was made up of children with 'Specific Language Impairment' and the second group was made up of children with 'Typically Developing Language' (Thompson, 2005, p. 175). Hypothesis for the study was that the two groups of children would be differentiated by their abilities to handle marked Theme, thematic progression and multiple Themes. The children's texts were collected through oral interactions and were analysed by quantifying the proportions of themes in each text. The result indicated that, except the multiple Themes, the choice of marked Theme and the ability to handle thematic choice and progression were not the factors that distinguished the two groups. On the basis of the result, Thompson (2005, p. 187) suspected that the lack of difference between the two groups was probably attributable to the type of genre used (narrative produced by children).

While such a suspicion might be true, the result might also have been attributable to the fact that the texts analysed were orally produced. That is, spoken language is so spontaneous that its textual organisation may not reflect the true knowledge of the producer. This statement is supported by Eggins (2004, p. 93), who states that 'the spoken text will contain everyday sorts of words [. . .], and often sentences will not follow standard grammatical conventions'. Thus having the children produce written texts might probably have yielded a different result.

Theme handling in a written text was investigated by King-Feng (2009), who analysed 45 compositions that students at Ningxia University in China wrote for their final examination. The investigation revealed the following

four problems that King-Feng (2009) thought affected the cohesion of the students' texts:

1. Overuse of constant Theme. This use was seen to make a text focused, but it was also seen to make a text 'read like a list' (King-Feng, 2009, p. 27). Furthermore, it was seen to prevent the writer from expanding on the information introduced in the Rheme.
2. Overuse of thematised Theme. Thematised Theme is part of what Davies (1997) called 'contextual frames', but thematised Theme is an evaluation contextual frame (Forey, 2009, p. 153). It was seen to be a problem as the students in the study by King-Feng used it at the beginning of their texts, as opposed to the key points of transition. According to King-Feng (2009), the use of thematised theme at the beginning of a text was inappropriate as that point required factual information.
3. The use of new information in thematic position. This use of Theme was considered as a problem since it indicated lack of focus on what the text was about and therefore made the text difficult to read. This point was also made by Moore (2006), who stated that pairing Theme with Given and Rheme with New would make a workplace text easy to read.
4. The use of a Theme that was previously presented in a Rheme, after a long text. This use of Theme was considered problematic as it probably made the reader make a lot of efforts to recall where the constituent was first introduced.

The identification of these four problems led King-Feng (2009) to conclude that analysis of Theme could be a useful tool for identifying students' problems with creating cohesion in their texts and then working out pedagogical interventions.

The studies on Theme, described above, need to be carried out further as they only assessed problems that students might have with their writing. That is, in both studies (Thompson, 2005; King-Feng, 2009), Theme was investigated to gather information that would be used to inform teaching practice, but after the data were collected, learners were not provided instructions to assess whether a teaching method would make the result observed change. In other words, the studies were only theoretical rather than practical. Thus future studies will combine analysis and teaching intervention to assess the extent to which learners can improve the problem observed at a certain point in time.

A study carrying out Theme analysis (besides moves) and implementing teaching practice was conducted by Ho (2009). In that study, an undergraduate student in Brunei was helped to write a review text by using 'Systemic Textual Analysis', which was defined as 'a text-based approach to teaching writing based on a combination of the genre-based theory and systemic functional linguistics' (Ho, 2009, p. 333). The study used the following three procedures. Firstly, the student was asked to read an article and write a review text. Secondly, model reviews were presented to the student in the following two weeks, in which teacher-student analysis focused on obligatory and optional moves, the types of clauses and

patterns of thematic progression and choices in the reviews. Thirdly, the student was asked to submit a second review (a rewritten version of the first review) and both the first and second reviews were subjected to systemic textual analysis to assess the impact of the instruction.

The result revealed that the student made significant progress with the writing of the moves and thematic choices in the review, but similar to the children in the study by Thompson (2005), the student made no significant progress with thematic progression. According to Ho (2009), thematic progression reached no significance for two possible reasons. The first reason was that thematic development probably constituted a difficulty to English as second language learners, and the second reason was that the instructional time was too little, so that the learner did not receive sufficient scaffolding to progress with her thematic progression. With regard to the results that were significant, Ho concluded that the systemic textual analysis appeared to be a potential tool for helping learners of English as a second language to improve their writing.

The study by Ho (2009) could be an example to follow in the context of the present study as it investigated both generic and linguistic structures, compared to other studies that were reviewed above, including those that investigated Theme. However, similar to other studies reviewed in the present chapter, the study by Ho (2009) did not focus on readability, which may be one of the main purposes for helping learners with genre learning (Cheng, 2007). Furthermore, similar to the study conducted by Yayli (2011), the study by Ho (2009) was a case study in which a text written by

one learner before and after the instruction was assessed. While explicit genre-based approaches are widely used with case study designs, which are frequent in social sciences (Burton, 2014, p. 215), using them to see the extent to which they help a group of learners as a whole class progress with their workplace writing may be interesting. The present study, therefore, attempts to extend the previous studies by investigating the extent to which an explicit genre-based approach might help the target learners improve the readability of their texts through the allowable order of moves, appropriate thematic choices and thematic progressions in the context of the target workplace.

In summary, the present chapter has explained and discussed analyses that have been carried out when using an explicit genre-based approach as a prelude to the analyses that are implemented in the present study. A focus was placed on genre-level analysis in the framework of the ESP and SFL genre traditions, and it was placed on register and linguistic level analyses in the framework of the SFL genre tradition. For teaching purposes, focus was placed on SFL genre-pedagogy and the notion of task since these components are used in the present study.

Based on the studies that were reviewed, the present chapter has indicated that each context of genre use is unique. This indication means that although a number of genre analyses have been undertaken in similar contexts, genres need to be identified and analysed for each context if they are to be taught in a way they are expected by those who use them. The analyses help a researcher or a teacher to identify the preferences of

those who evaluate writing success in a given context. Furthermore, as some contexts may have a variety of text types, the analysis of how frequently the text types are used may help a researcher or teacher to decide on which text types to prioritise in getting learners started in their work context.

Another indication the present chapter has given is that when learners become genre analysts, not only do they become able to write the texts used for the instruction but also to transfer the writing skills they have gained to other writing endeavours (Yayli, 2011). This transfer is particularly relevant to the context of the present study since the context is predominated by a variety of text types, as will be presented in Chapter 4 of the present thesis.

Mentioning transfer is not to suggest that an explicit genre-based approach is a 'skills-based approach' as described by Ivanič (2004, p. 227–8). According to Ivanič (2004), a skills-based approach to writing considers that abilities gained in one context are applicable to all other contexts. What is being suggested in the present study about the effect of an explicit genre-based approach is that the studies reviewed have indicated that learners become 'language analysts' (Knight, 2001, p. 163), so that they continue learning by themselves when their classroom training has ended. In other words, it refers to 'a transfer of skills of recontextualization across different genres requiring awareness of different purposes, different contexts and different lexico-grammatical features' (Yayli, 2011, p. 127).

The chapter has further indicated that an explicit genre-based approach can help learners to write their texts concisely in a way that saves a reader's time in reading the bulk of information that in a technologically developed world is quickly circulated via email. The concern of the present study, however, is that none of the studies reviewed was seen to implement an explicit genre-based approach in a classroom with learners who are already engaged in a workplace. Most importantly, of the studies conducted with university students, none used a control variable that was characterised by an alternative genre-based approach such as suggested by the NRS genre scholars (Freedman, 1993; Dias, 1994).

Last, but not the least, one of the aims of an explicit genre-based approach is to improve learners' writing (Cheng, 2007, p. 288), which can mean that learners are expected to improve the readability of their texts. However, none of the studies reviewed addressed the extent to which workplace learners could improve the readability of their texts when helped with an explicit genre-based approach. Therefore, by building on 'a model of both language and context', that is, the 'theory of how language is used' (Martin, 2012, p. 119), the present study investigates the texts the target learners most frequently write. Furthermore, it investigates the text features that are valued in the target workplace, and the extent to which an explicit genre-based approach helps the target learners improve the readability of their texts. These components constitute the research questions, which were stated at the end of the introduction, and are explained in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Methodology is a broad area of collecting research data, and it comprises more specific tools named methods (Burgess, Sieminski & Arthur, 2006, p. 53). Thus, in this chapter, specific methods used to collect data for the present study are elaborated upon. Before the methods are elaborated upon, a detailed description of the target workplace is provided in order to further contextualise the study and provide an additional rationale for choosing the topic of an explicit genre-based approach for the present study. Following further contextualisation of the study are the explanations of the relevance of the research questions, which were presented in Chapter 1, and then the ethical issues that were addressed in the study are introduced. As the present study was piloted, the methods section starts by presenting the methods used in the pilot study and explaining the changes that emerged. Then the section provides details of the methods that remained for the main study. This chapter ends with a reflection on the epistemological and ontological perspectives that are taken into account in the present study.

3.1 Description of the target workplace

The target workplace is described in this section by focusing on its location, activities, employees and employee development. Furthermore, a focus is made on the types of courses taught in the target workplace, and a particular emphasis is placed on the courses of English. Then the course on which the present study focuses is clarified. This section ends with two

points. The first point clarifies how English Proficiency Levels are determined and taught in the target workplace in order to provide background information on the levels of participants in the experiment, which will be explained later in the present chapter. The second point further clarifies the origin of the idea for the present study.

3.1.1 Location, activities and employees

The target workplace is located in Angola, Southern Africa, and its main activities comprise exploration of oil and gas. It is a branch of a North American multinational company, and its employees come from different parts of the world such as the United States, France, Spain and Nigeria. However, most employees are Angolan. As it is a branch of a North American multinational company, the target workplace's entire employees use English as the language of work.

The employees work in different departments such as Information Technology, Finance, Supply Chain Management, Human Resources, and Drilling and Production. Most of them are both field and office workers and possess a computer on which they perform their daily work, which requires them to write different text types, as will be seen in Chapter 4 of the present thesis.

Employees have different work schedules: Some work 28/28, which means they work for 28 days and then go on time off for 28 days; some work 21/21, and some work 5/2. Employees on this last schedule work from Monday to Friday, and they rest on Saturday and Sunday.

3.1.2 Employee development

The target workplace continuously develops its employees. To do that, it has a training centre in which employees take different courses such as Petro Skills, Facilitation and Consulting, Computing and Languages (Portuguese and English). Languages are explained further in the next two subsections as they incorporate writing, which is the concern of the present study.

3.1.2.1 Teaching of Portuguese and English

Portuguese is taught to expatriate employees and their spouses, and English is taught to Angolan employees. As was explained in the introduction to the present thesis (Section 1.2), English is taught as a foreign language since it is not widely spoken in the country, that is, it is only used for very specific purposes such as in the target workplace. By contrast, Portuguese is taught as a second language as it is widely spoken in the country, and expatriate employees can speak it with everybody and everywhere they go.

Although the two languages are taught in the target workplace, they serve different purposes. Portuguese is taught to help expatriate employees and their spouses to socialise in the Angolan community in activities such as going shopping and going to the beach. Expatriate employees can also use Portuguese at the target workplace to socialise with their Angolan co-workers, but they only do that if they want. However, expatriate employees need Portuguese to attend meetings with other Angolan national companies in which only Portuguese is used.

In the target workplace, however, English is required for the Angolan employees as it is the language of work. Sometimes the Angolan employees speak Portuguese when they are in the absence of an expatriate co-worker, but they usually use English when it comes to writing. The status of English in the target workplace might change, but until the present study ended, English was the language of work.

The learning of English is prioritised in developing Angolan national employees in the target workplace. That is, after having hired new employees, the target workplace first provides tests of English through the training centre in order to determine the English Proficiency Level Scores (clarified in Table 7 below). Then, it provides courses of English.

Table 7: English Proficiency Level (EPL) Scores in the target institution

EPL Score Ranges	Proficiency Levels
1–4	Beginner
5–8	Elementary
9–12	Pre-intermediate
13–16	Intermediate
17–20	Upper-intermediate
21–24	Post-intermediate
25–28	Advanced

3.1.2.2 Types of English Courses

This subsection describes the types of English courses provided in the training centre, the specific times that learners have lessons, the requirements for learners in attending the courses and the reasons for the requirements.

The training centre provides three types of English courses: immersion, intensive and part-time. The immersion course takes nine weeks and

learners study from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., including two hours' lunch break, from Monday to Sunday. On Sundays, the course only runs from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m. This type of course requires learners to be excused from work, so that they only concentrate their attention on learning. The course also requires learners to be isolated from their families for the following two reasons: firstly, the course is taught in the main field of operations and secondly, it requires learners to communicate only in English. The immersion course provides learners with a maximised exposure to the target language because there are more expatriate employees in the main field of operations than there are in the city. Learners study two levels: pre-intermediate and intermediate.

The intensive course takes five weeks, and learners study from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., including two hours' lunch break, from Monday to Friday. As well as the immersion course, the intensive course is taught in the main field of operations, and learners are excused from work. However, this type of course does not require all the learners to remain in the main field of operations. Only the learners who live far away from their homes remain in the main field of operations during the course. Those learners whose homes are within five to six miles go to attend lessons in the morning and return to their homes in the afternoon. As the intensive course is the beginning of the English training, it does not require learners to communicate only in English. Learners study two levels: beginner and elementary.

The part-time course takes 14 weeks and is provided in the city (Luanda). Lessons run from Monday to Friday, and they take an hour on a daily basis. As it provides learners with only an hour on a daily basis, this course does not require learners to be excused from work; that is, learners have a lesson and then return to their offices. The part-time course is an alternative for the departments that want their employees to improve their English, but they do not want to excuse them from work for business reasons. Learners study from beginner to post-intermediate level. It is with the learners doing part time courses that the present study was conducted.

3.1.3 English Proficiency Levels and teaching

English Proficiency Levels (EPLs) in the training centre are determined by using Nelson English Language Tests (Fowler & Coe, 1976) and by interviewing learners for 15 minutes. The following subsections explain the procedures used to determine the proficiency levels, the reasons for using the Nelson English Language Test (despite being old), the levels that are taught and the material used to teach the levels. Finally, a brief focus is made on the rationale for conducting the present study.

For the determination of the proficiency levels, first the candidate is interviewed by a minimum of two teachers, and each teacher awards a score. The oral score is the average of the scores provided by interviewers. Second, the candidate takes the Nelson English Language Test and the score achieved is summed to the oral score. The average between the oral and the score from the Nelson English Language Test is

the candidate' overall EPL score, which ranges from 1 to 28 (See Table 7 above).

Although it is very old, designed in 1976, Nelson English Language Test is still used in the target workplace for a number of reasons of which the following three are the most salient. First, teachers have found it more reliable than other tests such as Oxford Placement Test, as it is in four series (labelled A, B, C, D), and that when taken by a large group, 10 people for example, it allows candidates to sit next to each other and with very few chances of copying from each other. Second, employees take the test on a routine basis. For example, if an employee takes a course and then stops for more than six months, he or she needs to sit for the test again before resuming the course. The varieties of the test series here again help prevent the candidate from memorising the test. Third, it is a multiple choice test, so that it can quickly help a teacher to see where the candidate has a problem with the linguistic structures.

However a suitable replacement test has not yet been found. For general English purposes, efforts are being made to find an updated test that can provide the benefits teachers have identified when using Nelson English Language Test in placing candidates at their proficiency levels.

Of the proficiency levels in Table 7, advanced level is not taught in the target workplace as learners are expected to learn sufficient English to operate by the time they reach post-intermediate level. If a learner has a need to deepen his or her English for technical reasons, arrangements are made for training abroad such as in South Africa or the United States.

The proficiency levels have been taught through the Headway Textbook Series by Soars and Soars (2007), which are popular with private schools in providing general English in Angola in general and in the target workplace in particular. The textbooks are divided into six levels: beginner, elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. The upper-intermediate and the post-intermediate proficiency levels are taught by using the upper-intermediate textbook, which is divided into two parts: the first six units are for the upper-intermediate level and the last six units are for the post-intermediate level. The proficiency levels mentioned here have been taught in the target workplace for more than 20 years, and the focus has only been on general English. This focus contributed to the origin of the idea for the present study the research questions of which are explained in the next section.

3.2 Explanation of the research questions

This section starts by restating the research questions (presented in Chapter 1) to provide a frame from which the rest of the present chapter develops. Below are the three research questions:

1. What texts do the target learners write in their workplace?
2. What text features are valued in the target workplace?
3. What effects can an explicit genre-based approach have on the readability of the texts written by the target learners?

Each of these research questions was relevant to the achievement of the aim of the present study, which was to investigate how best to support

learners with their workplace writing. The first question was aimed at finding the texts learners most frequently write (see Chapter 4) and helped to structure a unit of classroom work (explained later in the present chapter). The first question responded to the principle of explicit genre-based approaches, which states that learners should be helped with language demands of their academic or professional contexts (Hammond & Derewianka, 2001, p. 186; Hyland, 2007, p. 149). More specifically, the first question was aimed at obtaining information through which a teacher could help learners see the connection between what they learn in the classroom and what they do in their offices.

The second question was complementary to the first question. It complemented the first question in the sense that once the texts were collected, it was necessary to obtain insights into the features that potential readers, particularly those in higher status, valued in the texts (potential readers explained later in this chapter); it is the potential readers who ultimately evaluate the success of their subordinates in the workplace. The target learners also write for colleagues of the same status, but these colleagues do not evaluate the success in the workplace writing. Therefore, colleagues of the same status were not counted as specialist informants. Both the first and the second questions were preparatory to the third question.

The third question was the core of the present study. That is, it was aimed at investigating the extent to which an explicit genre-based approach could help learners improve their workplace writing. More specifically, it was

aimed at assessing the extent to which structured classroom tasks such as engaging learners in (a) identifying the purpose of a text, (b) discussing the influence of the relationship between writer and reader in making linguistic choices and (c) analysing moves and linguistic features would help the target learners improve the readability of their texts. Particularly, the third question was firstly aimed at testing the null hypothesis that a group of learners taught with an explicit genre-based approach and a group of learners involved in the implicit genre-based approach would achieve the same results in the measures of readability, allowable order of moves, informational Theme and thematic progression. Secondly, the third question was aimed at verifying the alternative hypotheses that either (a) the group taught with an explicit genre-based approach would achieve superior results or (b) the group involved in the implicit genre-based approach would achieve superior results.

3.3 Ethical issues

A number of ethical issues were addressed in conducting the present study. The first ethical issue concerned the search for the consent to undertake the study in the target workplace, as is recommended by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2011, Guideline 13). In compliance with this guideline, I sent a consent form to the language services supervisor of the target workplace, and she had no objection to allowing the research to start. The consent form is in Appendix 1.

The second and the third ethical issues were as follows. The second ethical issue regarded gaining the research participants' consent

(Appendix 2), and it was done in each dataset that was collected (BERA, 2011, Guideline 10). The third ethical issue regarded data privacy (BERA, Guideline 25). More clearly, for each dataset collected, efforts were made to keep participants' identities anonymous. However, the possibility of participants wishing to have their identities revealed was also considered in line with the following statement: 'researchers must also recognize participants' rights to be identified with any publication of their original works or other inputs, if they so wish' (BERA, 2011, Guideline 25).

The fourth ethical issue concerned my dual role as a teacher and a researcher in the target workplace. In other words, the fact that participants were colleagues of mine in the target workplace and knew I was carrying out a piece of work that would benefit their learning could have made them feel obliged to provide the data. Therefore, caution was exercised by informing participants that the provision of data was not obligatory. For example, it was made clear that participants were requested to provide data on a voluntary basis. The four ethical issues presented here are only a starting point as a reference is made to ethics where necessary throughout the present thesis.

3.4 Methods

As the study was piloted, the methods used in the pilot study are first introduced below. Such an introduction is relevant here since the methods used in the pilot study served as a learning experience and improvement in the process of my research. Then the changes that emerged from the

pilot study and the methods that were used in the main study are explained.

3.4.1 Methods used in the pilot study

In the pilot study, I used a questionnaire for learners, texts written by learners, texts written by experts, an experiment, post-instruction interviews and a diary. These methods are explained in detail below, but prior to that explanation, it may be worth saying that in the period between the pilot study and the main study, I was engaged in constant reading and reflections on the methods used in the pilot study, so that in the main study some methods were dropped and others were kept for the reasons that will be explained in the present subsection.

The questionnaire was submitted to 65 respondents randomly selected from a population of 130 employees and was aimed at gathering eight datasets corresponding to eight questions in the questionnaire. The first question helped me to learn participants' ages. At that point of the study, I deemed learning participants' ages necessary as participants whose ages are below 18 require their parents' consent to participate in a study (BERA, 2011, Guideline 18). The second question provided me with the information regarding the time participants had been working in the target workplace. With that question, I particularly aimed at gaining insights into the extent to which old employees continued learning English. In the third question I aimed to understand whether participants had learned English before joining the target workplace as such data would shed some light on the extent to which effort should be made in helping the target learners

with the learning of English. In other words, the fewer the employees who had previously learned English, the more effort would be needed to help learners with their learning of English.

The remaining four questions can be explained as follows. In the fourth question, I asked the types of work participants did, namely field work, office work or both field work and office work. It was expected that the more office work participants did, the more writing they probably practised, and therefore more support with writing was necessary. Similarly, in the fifth question I asked the frequency with which the target learners used the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to see the extent to which writing was exercised. In the sixth question, I asked how the target learners felt about their knowledge of the four skills. In the seventh question, I went further into asking the type of texts that the target learners most frequently wrote in their workplace, and in the eighth question I asked the channels through which the texts were submitted. Again, in this question I aimed to learn the extent to which writing was a worthwhile area on which to focus.

Regarding texts, 32 learners' (sample texts) were collected from 16 volunteers. In such texts, I aimed to learn the communicative purposes and determine the genres used in the target workplace. Seventeen texts written by experts were obtained from the textbooks designed for teaching business writing in different workplaces (Hogan, 2005; Poe, 2006; Brieger, 2011). In those texts, I aimed to learn the moves and the linguistic

features chosen by the expert writers with a view to helping the target learners with their writing.

The experiment was aimed at simultaneously exploring the effects of explicit and implicit genre-based approaches in a classroom. For that aim, I formed two experimental groups, and each group was composed of 10 participants. Each group served as the control for the other, and the groups received instructions for five days (an hour a day).

Since I am employed in the target workplace as a teacher, I had to balance between work and research commitments at the time. Therefore, to carry out the experiment, I agreed with a co-worker to teach the implicit-genre group while I was teaching the explicit-genre group. I designed a teaching plan (Appendix 3) to help my co-worker with the implicit-genre group, and the plan for the implicit-genre group comprised comprehension questions of the texts that were used with the explicit-genre group.

To assess learning in the experiment, in the pilot phase, I had participants write a pre-test and a post-test. The tests comprised the texts participants wrote by responding to prompts, which are presented later in the present chapter. Other details provided later are the measures that were assessed. Such details are not provided here to avoid repetitions since the procedure followed in the pilot study is almost the same as the procedure followed in the main study.

The post-instruction interviews were mainly aimed at seeking participants' opinions about the experiment, and this was an attempt to use the 'follow-

up task' stage (Yasuda 2011, p. 116). Following are the explanations on the duration of the interviews, the venue, topics discussed and characterisation of the interviews for each group of participants. Then, a brief account of the different approaches used in interviewing the two groups is provided.

In the explicit-genre group, I interviewed each of the ten participants for a minimum of 10 minutes, and the interviews took place in my office. I recorded (audio) the interviews with the participants' consent. In the interviews I sought to understand participants' opinions about the tasks they had just done in the experiment, their perception of the relevance of the materials they had used and the time the experiment had taken. Other questions followed from these topics since the interviews were 'semi-structured' as opposed to 'structured' and 'unstructured' interviews (Nunan, 1992, p. 149; Bryman, 2008, p. 438). In structured interviews, participants' answers only depend on researcher's questions and in unstructured interviews participants elaborate freely on their views (Nunan, 1992; Bryman, 2008). The interviews with the participants in the explicit genre-group were semi-structured as I needed to first focus on specific points such as the participants' opinions about the genre tasks.

The interviews with the implicit-genre group took 20 minutes and were conducted as a whole class, a 'focus group' (Bryman, 2008, p. 473), in the participants' classroom. Instead of using all the topics used with the explicit-genre group as a starting point, I asked participants to simply comment on the importance of the tasks they had carried out during the

lessons and the two texts they had used (similar to those in Appendix 4). While the interviews with the explicit-genre group were audio-recorded and structured, the interviews with the implicit genre-group were not; I only used a diary (explained below) in which I noted the participants' comments, and the interviews were unstructured.

My use of different approaches when interviewing the explicit-genre group and when interviewing the implicit-genre group is attributable to the ways the groups were taught. That is, the explicit-genre group received explicit instruction whereas the implicit-genre group received implicit instruction. The different ways the groups were taught made me feel that more explicit questions could be asked for the explicit-genre group and for the implicit genre group a more open-ended approach could be better in order to understand their discovery of the points they deemed paramount during exposure in the classroom. However, it should be recognised that approaching the groups in different ways constitutes a gap as it runs counter to fairness in treating research participants (BERA, 2011, Guideline 24), a point that I missed when interviewing the groups in the pilot study.

The last method I used in the pilot study, as mentioned above, was a diary. The diary I used resembles what is called 'the diary as a log of the researcher's activities' (Bryman, 2008, p. 225). This diary is different from the 'diary as a method for data collection' and the 'diary as a document' (Bryman, 2008, p. 225). The last two types of diaries are written at a researcher's request, but the diary I used in the pilot study was my

document to keep track of the data when audio recording was impossible. Succinctly, the methods used in the pilot study provided a basis for the main study, but my revision and reflection on them resulted in some changes to which I turn in the next subsection.

3.4.2 Changes emerging from the pilot study

The changes emerging from the pilot study are explained in this subsection by referring back to the methods in the order they are presented above. Whether a method was dropped or was kept for the main study, the reason or reasons for the choice made are provided.

Six changes emerged from the pilot study. The first change regards the questionnaire for learners. The questionnaire for learners was dropped in the main study as it was found to contain information that was not useful, as seen in the first three questions. In the first question, for example, information regarding ages was found to be unnecessary as participants were adult workplace professionals; they are responsible for themselves. The second question was not necessary because English is the language of work in the target workplace. That is, the fact that the Angolan national employees will continue improving it can be taken for granted. A similar point can be made with regard to the third question. That is, whether participants recognised the need to learn English or not, they would learn it as it is the requirement of the target workplace.

Other questions were illuminating as directly or indirectly they sought data about writing. For example, the frequency of the participants who did office

work was approximately 81 per cent and the frequency with which the participants used the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) indicated that reading and writing corresponded to approximately 95 per cent. However, I felt that, for the purpose of genre analysis, texts that the target learners had written would be sufficient and more illuminating as they would provide insights into what the target learners did well and where they might need support.

The second emerging change concerns the texts written by the target learners. These texts were still used in the main study, but they were collected again for the purpose of 'triangulation' (Bryman, 2008, p. 607; OpenLearn, 2014). That is to say, text collection was repetitively used to ensure the texts collected are the ones most frequently written in the target workplace. The change here resides in the fact that the number of texts increased in the main study. More specifically, 114 texts were collected in the main study while only 32 texts were collected in the pilot study.

The third change that emerged from the pilot study is about the texts written by experts. Texts written by experts were dropped in that those experts were not part of the target workplace. As was stated above, the texts were gleaned from textbooks designed for the purpose of teaching business writing in different institutions (Hogan, 2005; Poe, 2006; Brieger, 2011). While such textbooks might give general views of writing in business, they may not be sufficient in that each business institution could be considered unique.

The fourth change regards the experiment. The experiment was still used, but it changed in terms of the number of participants, focus, and assessment of learners' achievement. While the groups in the pilot study were composed of 10 participants each, each group in the main study was composed of 18 participants. This change was made in light of the feedback I received on the Year 1 Final Report and my further reading. Similar to the feedback I received on the Year 1 Final Report, Dörnyei (2007, p. 99) suggested that a 'comparative and experimental' study should have a minimum of 15 participants. Thus, the number of participants in the main study was raised to 18 per each group.

Regarding focus, in the pilot study, attention was equally focused on the effects of explicit and implicit genre-based approaches, but in the main study main attention was focused on the effect of an explicit genre-based approach. However, the implicit genre-based approach was still used as control of the explicit genre-based approach. In other words, I had a control group of learners who did not receive genre instructions in the classroom, but they were engaged on the job. More clarification on the control group will be provided later in the present chapter.

The focus changed for two reasons. The first reason was that I had to balance between my work and research commitments, as I did in the pilot study. That is, working with both experimental and the control groups in the classroom would have taken most of my work time. The second reason was an attempt to control factors that possibly distorted the findings in the pilot study. For example, although I provided my co-worker

with a lesson plan to teach the implicit-genre group in the pilot study (Appendix 3), I found it hard to monitor what happened in my co-worker's classroom. More clearly, it might have happened that my co-worker directly or indirectly explicitly focused on the genre features.

Regarding assessment of learners' achievements, in the pilot study a focus was only made on the written products in the pre-test and post-test. In light of my further reading of previous researchers' studies on explicit genre-based approaches such as Cheng (2007) and Yayli (2011), I decided to add a component that engaged learners in the lessons during the experiment (the engagement is explained later in the present chapter). Furthermore, in the pilot study learners' written products were assessed through a 'texture index' by Roseberry (1995, p. 205). While Roseberry (1995) considered such a formula powerful in measuring readability in education and business contexts, I realised that the formula was initially used with long expository academic texts. As the present study dealt with short email messages (requests), Roseberry's formula was dropped.

The fifth change emerging from the pilot study appertains to the post-instruction interviews. In the pilot study, the explicit and implicit genre groups participated in post-instruction interviews as both groups received instruction in the classroom. As in the main study the explicit genre-group commented on the lessons throughout the instruction, I felt that the post-instruction interviews were no longer necessary. I only analysed the comments the participants had made throughout the lessons (Appendix 5), which I captured through audio-recording and note-taking.

The sixth change regards the diary. As was explained above, what I considered a diary in the pilot study was my notes of the points I was unable to capture through audio-recording. For the main study, I decided to drop the term 'diary' and simply used the term 'notes'; the term 'field notes' would probably be more appropriate. Having explained the changes that emerged from the pilot study, I now turn to the details of the methods that remained for the main study.

3.4.3 Methods used in the main study

In the main study, three methods were used to collect data: collection of learners' sample texts, collection of specialist informants' views of the writing features that are valued in the target workplace, and implementation of an experiment. These methods are explained in detail in the following subsections.

3.4.3.1 Learners' sample texts

Learners' sample texts are the texts the target learners write in their workplace. A hundred and fourteen of these texts were collected from a population of 205 target learners, and the texts were email messages. As email messages can comprise various text types, the texts collected were categorised based on communicative purposes such as 'to request information,' 'to make an invitation' and 'to request a service' (Swales, 1990, p. 10, Eggins, 2004, p. 56). These communicative purposes characterised different genres (genres analysed in Chapter 4). The following subsections explain the collection of texts, the ethical

considerations involved in the collection of texts, and the purpose for analysing the texts.

Learners' sample texts were collected on a voluntary basis. That is to say, learners who had signed a consent form (Appendix 2) were sent an email in which they were asked voluntarily to provide two texts they had recently written as part of their work. From the target population (N=205), only 57 volunteers provided the 114 email texts mentioned above in a period of two weeks.

As learners' sample texts were email messages, the possibility of having more than one contributor to an email message was considered in terms of ethics. That is to say, the consent from each contributor would have been sought in compliance with BERA (2011, Guideline 13). However, all the email messages that were collected were written by the volunteers and were 'one-way emails', as described by Gimenez (2006, p. 154).

The collection and analysis of learners' sample texts in the present study is different compared to the way analyses are made in explicit genre-based approaches. More clearly, while researchers in explicit genre-based approaches usually collect texts that are written by expert writers (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, 2001), in the present study I analysed the texts that were written by the target learners. I decided to analyse the texts written by the target learners as the target learners are already engaged in their job. More specifically, their texts are authentic as they are the ones they write in the exercise of their job.

Based on my understanding of texturing, such as the use of Theme and thematic progression, I aimed at gaining initial insights into what the target learners already knew about writing when engaged in their workplace. My analysis of the target learners' texts was then complemented by the insights gained from the specialist informants, and the insights are explained in the next subsection.

3.4.3.2 Questionnaire for specialist informants

A questionnaire (Appendix 6) was submitted to 91 specialist informants in order to complement data from the learners' sample texts. That is, the questionnaire was aimed at gaining insights into the features that are valued in the texts written in the target workplace. The following subsections provide details of the design of the questionnaire and submission, the specialist informants, the insights gained and the analysis of the respondents' answers. More clearly, the design is described by stating the number of questions, the types of questions asked, and the way the questionnaire was submitted. Regarding the specialist informants, focus is given on who they are, why they were considered relevant, how they were selected and the ethical consideration involved in handling the data. Finally, clarifications of the insights that were sought, the reasons for seeking such insights and the way of analysing the respondents' answers are provided.

The questionnaire comprised seven questions, and these questions were of two types: four open-ended and three closed-ended. The questions could have been of only one type, closed-ended, for example, to save the

informants' time in answering them and mine in analysing the answers. However, the fact that participants should be given some freedom to express their answers was taken into account by including open-ended questions (Hammersley, Gomm, Woods, Faulkner, Swan, Baker, Bird, Carthy, Mercer & Parrot, 2001, p. 185).

The reasons for submitting the questionnaire online were to save the specialist informants' time and maximise responses. As all the specialist informants possess computers, and the computers are connected to the internet, it was possible for the specialist informants to answer the questionnaire without leaving their offices, which might have negatively affected their work time. In short, submitting the questionnaire online was aimed at facilitating the specialist informants with the process of answering the questionnaire and expecting an acceptable number of responses.

All the specialist informants are employees (a mixture of native and non-native speakers of English) with leadership roles in the target workplace. These specialist informants were relevant in providing insights into the features valued in the texts since they are the ultimate assessors of their subordinates' success, as stated above. Furthermore, they identify their subordinates' development needs and plan courses accordingly. Sometimes their subordinates also identify their learning needs by themselves, but they need to agree with their leaders before they are enrolled on a course. The leaders, who were the specialist informants, finally grant approval for their subordinates to attend a course and then follow up the progress of learning after the course has ended.

The specialist informants were selected on a voluntary basis. That is to say, I collaborated with the Human Resources Department of the target workplace, which provided me with a list that contained 91 leaders. I approached these leaders through an email containing the purpose of the present study and requesting voluntary participation (Appendix 6).

In line with BERA (2011, Guidelines 10 & 25), the ethical issues were addressed in three ways. Firstly, the Human Resources Department was informed of the aim of the study; secondly, participation was requested on a voluntary basis (as mentioned above), and thirdly, identities were made anonymous, which was easy to achieve as the questionnaire was set in such a way that the respondents' answers were returned without showing who responded.

The questionnaire to specialist informants sought the following insights: the relevance of macroTheme, readers' concern with the quality of a text, types of texts read in the target workplace, factors contributing to the readability of a text, readers' concern with the role relationships between people interacting and respondents' seniority in their jobs.

The relevance of macroTheme was sought by focusing on an email subject line. As was analysed by Martin and Rose (2007, p. 198), macroThemes can recur. For example, in the particular case of email messages, the content in a subject line can be a macroTheme and the beginning of the bigger text, after a salutation, can also be a macroTheme. However, in the questionnaire to specialist informants, analysis was only

focused on the effect of a macroTheme that corresponds to a subject line, as this is the first component that is seen before an email text is opened.

In the question about macroTheme, about the subject line in this case, I aimed to understand whether this part was determinant in opening an email message. If the specialist informants considered it a determinant element, then the subject line was going to be emphasised in the teaching phase of the present study. Attention to the subject line would then be aimed at maximising a writer's achievement of his or her communicative purpose as the purpose of an email will be fully known when the email is opened (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005). In other words, the quicker an email is opened, the quicker the communicative purpose will be fully known.

In the question about reader's concern with the quality of a text, I aimed to elicit whether the reader was only mindful of the content or was also mindful of grammatical accuracy. Grammatical accuracy here means aspects of correct grammar such as subject/verb agreements, inflections such as the third person singular and the use of an appropriate tense. In that question, I sought to gain views on grammatical accuracy as the literature has indicated that grammatical accuracy might not concern business people, particularly when communicating with members of their institution (Evans, 2012, p. 210).

If the specialist informants stated they had no concerns with grammatical accuracy, then grammatical accuracy was not going to be prioritised. Priority could instead be given to text organisational patterns such as an analysis of a text into clauses, analysis of clause boundaries, analysis of

clause constituents and the ordering of clause constituents for the purpose of improving 'texture' (Moore, 2006, p. 47). These organisational patterns could be prioritised by focusing on their functional nature; that is, they could be analysed by looking at their contribution to the construction of a text as whole.

In seeking information regarding the types of texts that are read in the target workplace, I aimed at triangulating the fact that the texts are email messages. That is to say, I had already identified the text types when analysing learners' sample texts, but I was now going to double-check them through the specialist informants' questionnaire. The result of the questionnaire, then, was going to give some confidence as to whether the texts are the ones used before I would analyse them to identify the purposes (such as making requests) and choose one genre for the experiment.

Insights into factors for readability were sought by focusing on the explicit clarification of a communicative purpose and the use of different levels of language such as everyday usage and technical usage (Eggins, 2004, p. 19). The use of technical language can have a negative impact on readability of a text in the sense that a writer may choose Themes that are 'New information' rather than 'Given information', therefore making a text difficult to read (Moore, 2006, p. 46). Although some texts may be addressed to readers who are already familiar with technical language (these readers will find no difficulties in reading), some readers may prefer to read simplified language in which everything written is clarified by

placing given information in a thematic position and new information in a rhematic position.

Readability insights were further sought by focusing on different types of formatting a text. That is, I provided the respondents with two texts: one text was written in prose and another text was written in bullet points (the two texts prepared by me). Following the approach by Forey (2004), as was explained in the literature review chapter, I asked the respondents to choose the type of formatting they preferred. Preference and readability may not be related, but I felt that a reader would prefer a text that facilitated his or her reading. In fact, formatting impinged on how participants perceived the readability of two memos in the study conducted by Forey (2004, p. 462).

Understanding whether the respondents were concerned with role relationships was sought by focusing on the forms of address. Forms of address such as 'Dear' and 'Hello/Hi' plus a name, which could be the first name or nickname, or the use of a title plus a surname or a full name were sought. These forms of address are said to indicate different role relationships (Eggins, 2004, p. 101). For example, an employee would choose 'Hi' to address a colleague of the same status whereas he or she would choose 'Dear' to address his or her leader. I have chosen to analyse these 'interpersonal dimensions' (Eggins, 2004, p. 101) as they come first after the subject line in email messages is introduced. More importantly, as was identified by Forey (2004, p. 456), the opening lines of a text have a strong influence in establishing interpersonal meaning. In

short, the question regarding concern with role relationships would help me to gain insights into how much the role relationships mattered to the specialist informants; the insights would, then, be signalled to the target learners.

The seniority of the specialist informants was an aside to the textual features that are valued in the target workplace. However, it was sought in the questionnaire as not all of the employees who hold leadership roles might be senior enough to know the features of successful texts for their workplace; I felt that the more time the specialist informants had worked in the target workplace, the stronger the insights they provided about the features of texts would be.

The specialist informants' answers were analysed by comparing the percentages of the insights they provided. That is, the percentages that were higher or the highest indicated the features that might require particular attention in classroom teaching. In the open-ended questions, the specialist informants provided additional answers, and I included these answers in the analysis in order to help me understand the features the specialist informants deemed relevant, but which I had not mentioned in the questionnaire. In short, all the efforts that were made from the analysis of the learners' sample texts to the analysis of data from the questionnaire were aimed at creating a basis for conducting an experiment, which would indicate the extent to which an explicit genre-based approach was a worthwhile pursuit in the target workplace.

3.4.3.3 The experiment

The experiment is clarified in this subsection by first describing the participants in the two groups of participants and then by explaining how the groups were formed and what each group did. Next, the clarifications of the duration of the experiment, the genre that was taught, and the assessment of the texts participants wrote at the beginning and end of the experiment are provided. Finally, an explanation of the evaluation of the significance of the results is given, and the way the explicit genre-based approach was handled in the classroom is elaborated upon.

3.4.3.3.1 Description of the participants

The participants comprised thirty-six adult learners (aged 25 and above). Of these learners, thirty were males and six were female. They were randomly selected from a database of 70 intermediate learners, who had been placed in their level by using Nelson English Language Tests (Fowler & Coe, 1976). Although they had already signed a consent form (Appendix 2), they were contacted by email in order to ask for their voluntary participation in the experiment. All of them agreed to participate.

3.4.3.3.2 Groups set-up and tasks performed

Two groups participated in the experiment: an experimental group (18 participants) and a control group (also 18 participants). To set up these groups, I made another random selection in order to avoid bias as to who would be part of the experimental group and who would be part of the control group. The experimental group participated in the explicit-genre instruction (details later in this chapter), and the control group remained

untaught since participants in it only served as control of the experimental group.

However, during the instruction participants in the control group continued doing their daily work, which also involved writing different text types including requests as will be evidenced in Chapter 4. In order to provide equal opportunities to both groups in terms of content and organisation of the genre, I gave the control group the texts that the experimental group used (Appendix 4) (BERA, 2011, Guideline 24). For each text they received, the control group answered comprehension questions (as explained in 3.4.3.3.7 below) in order to give them a purpose for reading. All the questions were checked by me in order to keep track of the two groups.

3.4.3.3.3 Duration of the experiment and the genre taught

Contrary to the pilot study, which only took five days, the experiment in the main study took nine weeks (one 60-minute lesson per week) and participants learned how to write an email to make *a delicate request*. As was defined on Page 38 of the present thesis, in a delicate request the requester needs to be persuasive enough to have the request accepted. This genre was adapted from the texts that participants appeared to write more frequently in their workplace (as will be evidenced in Chapter 4) and by using a template from the 'inlingua business writing' manual (Teacher's resource pack, 2002, p. 85).

3.4.3.3.4 Tests and assessment of learners' results

This subsection first clarifies the number of tests participants wrote and the prompts to which they responded in writing the tests. Then, it elaborates on the approaches used in writing each test and clarifies the measures assessed and the assessors. Finally, it explains how the results were calculated and, as was stated above, it clarifies how the significance of the results was assessed.

The two groups did two tests: a pre-test and a post-test. The two tests comprised the texts the groups wrote for 20 minutes under the instructions provided in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Instructions for pre- and post-tests in the experiment

<p>a. Instruction for the pre-test</p> <p>You are in charge of arranging transportation for your department, and this time you need Mr John Owen to be taken from the Staff House to the international airport tomorrow morning. However, the car of your department broke down this morning. Mr Owen is American. He has just come to train your staff on Financial Acumen and needs to travel back tomorrow.</p> <p>Write an email to Manuel Ferreira, the travel coordinator, for him to provide you with a car. As the travel department has been short of cars lately, write as many reasons as you can, to convince Manuel to provide you with the only car he has in stock.</p> <p>b. Instruction for the post-test</p> <p>You have three weeks' vacation, but you think you should have one more week to catch up with your personal plans. While you are on vacation, a lot of work will be waiting for you. So, your supervisor may be reluctant to give you one more week.</p> <p>Write an email to convince your supervisor to give you one more week.</p>
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The pre-test was based on 'a deep-end approach modelled on Willis' (1996) (cited in Badger & White, 2000, p. 159). According to Badger and White (2000), such an approach is used when a teacher is unable to

determine what learners know before teaching them. The approach allows learners to compare their texts with a text written by an expert, who can be the teacher. The post-test took place two weeks after the explicit instruction had ended. That is, it was delayed to allow the participants in the experimental group to experience the knowledge they had gained during the experiment, in their workplace.

The texts the two groups wrote in the pre-test and post-test were assessed by looking at readability. Readability here means the quality of a text that provides everything a reader needs to comprehend information in the text as was explained in Chapter 2 of the present thesis (p. 7). In the present study, this quality was thought to be conferred by the allowable order of moves, thematic progressions and thematic choices in a text. Readability was first assessed by two senior employees of the target workplace (explained below) and then by me. I looked at whether the allowable order of moves, thematic choices and thematic progressions influenced the scores provided by the senior employees.

Before explaining the assessment of readability carried out by senior employees, this subsection first clarifies the number of assessors, their work experience, education and the procedure used in selecting them as these clarifications can shed some light on the merit of the scores provided. Two senior employees carried out the assessment of readability. These senior employees work in the target workplace and have more than 15 years of work experience. Both of them hold a degree in Business Management and come from different countries: one is North American,

and the other is Angolan. For them to assess the texts, they were randomly selected from the 31 senior employees who had acted as specialist informants. Before they assessed the pre-test, the senior employees were reminded of the aim of the study, and kindly they agreed to participate in the assessment of the texts.

They worked separately in assessing learners' texts and used a scale from 0 to 10. Learners' scores were the average of the scores provided by the two assessors, and the agreements between the assessors were assessed by using 'Cohen's kappa coefficient' (Bryman, 2008, p. 265). Learners' names were removed from the texts to preserve identities as recommended by BERA (2011, Ethical Guideline 25).

For the pre-test, caution was taken to avoid giving assessors criteria for assessment as such criteria might have influenced their decisions in awarding scores. The assessors were only asked to base their judgement on their experience of a workplace text that was easy to read. However, after they had marked the pre-test, the assessors were requested to elaborate on the criteria they had used as such criteria would be used in the explicit teaching of the genre (an email to make a delicate request).

The criteria the two assessors used converged more than they diverged. That is to say, the first assessor said that for a text to be worth 10 points, it should be 'concise', 'compelling', 'quick to the point' and 'accurate in terms of grammar.' Similarly, the second assessor mentioned 'concise', 'compelling', and 'relevant' criteria. The only criterion the second assessor did not mention was 'grammatical accuracy'.

The assessment of readability in terms of moves, thematic progression and thematic choices was carried out by me. This assessment was undertaken in order to explore whether the moves, thematic progression and thematic choices played a role in the result provided by the senior employees. The moves were assessed by using Henry and Roseberry's (1998, p. 151) formula, which was presented in the literature review chapter (p. 56). As reiteration, the formula is $Move\ score = \frac{MP - 0.5(IM + MM)}{OM}$, where MP is the number of obligatory moves a student has used, IM is the number of inappropriate moves, MM is the number of misplaced moves, and OM is the number of obligatory moves in the target genre. The essence of this formula is to determine 'how well' a learner's text conforms to the patterns of allowable order of moves in a genre (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 151).

The assessment of thematic progression and thematic choices was made quantitatively; that is, it was made by using 'numerical data' (Hammersley, 2007, p. 131). In other words, the proportions of Theme in each text written by learners were calculated, following the procedure used by Thompson (2005). Thompson (2005, p. 181) used 'a software package designed for qualitative data analysis', but I carried out manual calculations as I had no software that could support quantitative analysis of Theme. To calculate the scores, I first divided the texts written by learners, in the pre-test and post-test, into clauses. Then I identified the Theme of each clause as seen in Figure 3 below, a text written by a

learner in the post-test. The clauses were simplexes or complexes as they constituted thematic structures.

The maximum score for thematic progressions and thematic choices was 10 points, which were divided by the number of topical Themes present in a learner's text, starting from the Theme of Clause 2. For thematic progression, Clause 1 was excluded as it is from that clause where the progression is identified; the progression can be identified either from the Theme or the Rheme of Clause 1 (note the difference between the calculation of thematic progression and the calculation of thematic choice below). Therefore, each Theme that shows progression, in Figure 3 below, is worth 1.43 points (10 divided by 7).

Figure 3: Calculation of thematic progressions and choices: An illustration

Subject: Request for one more week

Dear XXXXX,

1. I need your help about one more week for my vacation.
2. My father is sick at hospital
3. and the doctor in London need to talk me urgently.
4. I know that we have a lot of work
5. but my father's matter is very important.
6. I need your especial attention in this.
7. I will work in weekends before my vacation to organize the job
8. and during my absence Mike will support me.

Many thanks for your good understanding.

For the thematic choices, I considered the Themes of all the clauses in the text written by the learners. I proceeded that way as the choices between informational and interactional Themes begin with the beginning of a text. To give an example of the calculation, I have emboldened the interactional Themes and have underlined the informational Themes in Figure 3 above.

The text in Figure 3 has four informational Themes and four interactional Themes. As it has eight clauses, each Theme is worth 1.25 points (10 divided by 8). Therefore, the score for informational Theme is 5 points, and the score for interactional Theme is also 5 points.

For both thematic progressions and thematic choices, the scores from the pre-test were compared with the scores from the post-test to assess whether the instruction based on those measures contributed to the learners' improvement of their writing as reflected in the readability scores provided by the senior employees.

To identify Theme, I adopted the approach suggested by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 79). That is to say, I considered a Participant, a Process, or a Circumstance (only one of these) as the last component of Theme. I considered Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) approach because the component that comes at the very beginning of a clause is believed to have more impact on readability than the component that comes later in the clause. For example, in their study of 20 story books that were written for readers aged 2 to 11 years old, Guijarro and Zamorano (2009, p. 770–1) found that the writers of the story books chose to place the story characters in initial positions of clauses with the intention to facilitate children's reading. Although Guijarro and Zamorano's findings appertain to children aged 2 to 11 years old, they may be useful to the context of the target workplace as the texts the target learners write are mainly read by speakers of English as a foreign language. Thus the approach suggested

by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) may help to keep track of the readability of learners' texts in the target workplace.

Theme has not been analysed in all types of clauses in the literature (Berry, 1995, p. 63), so it is necessary to clarify the types of clauses in which Theme was analysed in the present study. By the 'types of clauses' here I do not mean the clauses in relation to the process types, as was explained in Chapter 2. I mean the MOOD. That is, 'declarative', 'interrogative' and 'imperative' clauses (Christie, 1999, p. 760). I also mean dependent and independent clauses. For example, in her study in which she investigated whether children would choose interactional or informational Theme, Berry (1995) chose to ignore the interrogative and imperative clauses. Her justification of the choice to ignore such clauses is that they 'raise even greater problems for thematic analysis than declarative clauses' (Berry, 1995, p. 63).

While such a justification might be true, Berry's choice was not adopted in the present study because of the types of texts that were analysed (email requests) in the present study. The texts that were analysed sometimes comprised only a command or an interrogative proposal as the following two examples from learners' sample texts illustrate.

Command only: *'Please encode our Cash Advance. Thanks.'*

Interrogative proposal only: *'Could you please review the proposed note for the department managers? Regards.'*

Adopting Berry's choice above, therefore, would have meant to discard the texts of those kinds. Succinctly, in the present study I analysed the Themes of declarative, interrogative and imperative clauses.

Another choice that has been made in the literature, as was explained in Chapter 2 of the present thesis (p. 40), is to ignore the Theme of a dependent clause when the dependent clause is in end position (Eggins, 2004, p. 315). In such a choice, when a dependent clause is at the beginning, in a clause complex, the entire dependent clause can be analysed the Theme. In this case, the independent clause is the Rheme. If the independent clause comes first, the entire dependent clause is part of Rheme. The reason for that choice is that the main contribution of a clause complex comes from the thematic structure of an independent clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 99). In the present study, I adopted that choice.

'Minor clauses' have not been analysed in the present study. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 100), minor clauses such as 'Dear X', 'Hello', 'good morning' and 'Thank you' do not have a thematic structure, so I do not include them in thematic analyses. Other types of clauses I do not include in thematic analysis are the ones characterised by 'exophoric ellipsis' such as 'looking forward to hearing from you', where the ellipsis is 'I am'. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), these last types of clauses have a thematic structure (the parts that constitute an ellipsis). However, I do not include them in the thematic analyses since they appear

to be too complex to analyse with learners who are at the early stage in their linguistic analyses.

The significance of the results was assessed by using the 'Wilcoxon signed-ranks z-test for two dependent samples' (Argyrous, 2011, p. 484), and an online Wilcoxon signed-ranks z-test calculator was used (Stangroom, 2014). The alpha or significance level set for the study was $p \leq 0.01$. The 'Wilcoxon signed-ranks z-test' was chosen because it is used to compare scores that come from the same participants (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 152).

3.4.3.3.5 Explicit-genre instruction

The explicit-genre instruction was implemented by drawing on the SFL pedagogy, which was explained in Chapter 2 as comprising five stages (Hyland, 2007, p. 159): setting the context, modelling, joint negotiation, independent construction and comparing. Following Chen and Su's (2012, p. 186) approach, I did not use the last stage (comparing) because the learners were learning through a genre-based approach for the first time. According to Chen and Su (2012, p. 186), the stage of comparing may be more effective after learners have acquired some genres; that is to say, learners can compare and contrast different genres when they have basic knowledge of genres. While such a belief should require research evidence, it was embraced in the present study for the sake of following a path that had already been followed.

To be more precise, in implementing the explicit-genre instruction I used the stages of setting the context, modelling, joint negotiation and

independent construction, in that sequence, and some stages recurred in each of the nine lessons. A summary of the lessons taught in the experiment is provided in Appendix 7. The following subsections provide details of the efforts made in each lesson, the recording and transcription of the interactions, the descriptions of each of the nine lessons, an explanation of how the data from the experimental group were analysed and the work that was carried out with the control group.

During the lessons, efforts were made to maximise learners' involvement in the process of genre learning. That is to say, learners were prompted to (a) comment on how they perceived the relevance of each analysis that was meant to help them with the readability of their texts and (b) actively interact in their groups. To help learners with that involvement, I split the class into four groups: two groups composed of five participants each and two groups composed of four participants each, totalling 18 learners. In a nutshell, the condition was created for maximising both 'borrowed consciousness' and 'shared consciousness' (Hyland, 2007, p. 158; Yayli, 2011, p. 123).

Where possible, researcher-participant interactions were audio-recorded, and where recording was impossible, interactions were captured through written notes. The notes will also be commented upon in Chapter 4. The recordings were made with learners' agreement and a suggestion was made that a learner could record the interactions by using his iPhone, for learners' comfort. The interactions were transcribed (Appendix 5) and then were shared with the learners before they were analysed.

The interactions were transcribed based on these procedures that were followed during the lessons. First, learners discussed the topics (described in the lessons below) in their groups and then I provided feedback. I prompted the learners to make comments on the topics discussed. It was during the feedback slots of the lessons that researcher-participant interactions were audio-recorded. Each of the four groups participated through a member and sometimes speech overlapped; that is, two people spoke at the same time.

Because of the ways in which the researcher-participant interactions took place, the transcriptions were made by using numbers corresponding to each group such as Group 1 and Group 2, respectively abbreviated as G1 and G2. Where the speech overlapped, the word 'participants' was used and was abbreviated as PPs. Six interactions were recorded, so numbers of recordings in the transcripts were also used such as Recording 1 and Recording 2, respectively abbreviated as R1 and R2. Following are the descriptions of each of the nine lessons and an explanation of how the interactions were analysed.

Lesson 1: Setting the context

In Lesson 1, I introduced two email messages (Emails A and B, Figure 4 below) and concentrated on the notion of 'register' (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 11). That is, I aimed at raising learners' awareness of what the genre was about (field), the role relationships between the writer and the reader as reflected in the linguistic choices (tenor), and the impact of the beginning of the genre in providing a broad idea of what the genre is about

(mode) as reflected in the macroTheme (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 36). In Lesson 1, this macroTheme corresponded to the content in the email subject line.

I set the task as in Figure 5 below, and learners answered the questions in their groups. I will comment on their answers in Chapter 4.

Figure 4: Instructional texts adapted from *ilingua business writing, Trainer's Manual, 2002, p. 85*

Email A

From: Figa, Miguel (mfgi)

To: Ferreira, Manuel (MZER)

Cc:

Subject: Transport request

Hi Manuel,

I'm writing to request your help. I need a car to take Mr Owen from the Staff House to the international airport tomorrow morning, but the car of my department broke down this morning. So please lend me one of the cars that you have in stock.

I know that your department has been short of cars lately, but I'll really appreciate it if you help me out of this situation. I will tell the driver to take the freeway so the car comes back to you as quickly as possible.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

Miguel

Email B

From: Lopez, Marianne

To: Dawson, Sylvia

Cc:

[1] Subject: Request for extended leave

[2] Dear Ms Dawson

[3] I am getting married in December and as my fiancé and I are planning a long trip for our honeymoon, I would like to request extended leave as follows: **[4]**

Month and year	Week Nos.	Holiday status
December 2013	50-52	Three weeks annual holiday for 2013
January & February 2014	1-5	Three weeks annual holiday for 2014 plus two weeks unpaid leave.

[5] I realise that this is an exceptional request, but I would be very grateful if you could grant this leave. **[6]** My extended absence can be unpaid. Alternatively, I can work an extra hour when I return until I complete the time I owe the company.

[7] I look forward to hearing from you.

[8] Best regards,

[9] Marianne

Figure 5: Task 1 of Lesson 1 in the explicit-genre teaching

- | |
|---|
| <p>Look at the Emails A and B, and answer the following four questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the emails about?2. What part of each email helped you, quickly, to discover what the email is about?3. Who wrote and who received each email?4. In which email do the writer and the reader have a close relationship? Give examples from the emails. |
|---|

Lesson 2: Modelling 1

In Lesson 2, I aimed at familiarising learners with the notion of moves in a genre. More specifically, I aimed at informing the learners that each move has a particular aim towards achieving the overall purpose of the genre (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 147). The lesson comprised two sections. In the first section, learners identified the moves and their aims. In the second section, they distinguished obligatory moves from optional moves.

Lesson 2.1 Identification of moves and aims

The identification of moves and aims was started by having learners work in their groups and find the parts they thought composed Email B (Figure 4 above). With that start, I aimed at valuing learners' previous knowledge rather than considering them as John Locke's 'tabula rasa' (Duschinsky, 2012, p. 509).

Tabula rasa is a term used by John Locke (as cited by Duschinsky, 2012) to inquire about whether a child's knowledge is based on an innate capacity or lived experience. The term has been interpreted as considering the mind of a child as empty from birth (Duschinsky, 2012, p. 515–6). When applied to genre-based approach, it would mean ignoring knowledge that learners already probably bring with them to a classroom.

In the present study, I considered that learners were already in possession of some knowledge, so I made every effort to start by exploring what learners knew before teaching them.

Lesson 2.2 Obligatory moves versus optional moves

The distinction between obligatory and optional moves requires analysing a large number of sample texts in order to determine recurrent stages, as was explained in the literature review (Section 2.5). However, in the present study I took a different path for identifying obligatory and optional moves. Based on the consideration of 'functional' stages in a text type (Eggins, 2004, p. 61), first I identified the moves in the target genre, which was only one text adapted from learners' sample texts and using a template from the inlingua business writing manual (Figure 4 above). Then I discussed the moves with learners in order to decide on which moves were obligatory and which ones were optional.

The reason for taking a different path was that I had access to no additional texts of the subtype 'an email to make a delicate request.' I could have used a text from the learners' sample texts, but learners' sample texts were not exemplars; they only provided an insight into the text types written in the target workplace. The text from the inlingua business writing manual, which was also a request, appeared to be an exemplar, so I adapted it for the teaching purpose. The caveat here is that I should have had more exemplars, preferably from the target workplace, in order to identify moves.

However, the path I took can be considered a worthwhile pursuit as it involved the voices of the potential users of the genre—the target learners. In fact, the target learners' contributions shaped my initial analysis of moves to a certain extent as will be seen in the comments presented in Chapter 4. The moves are numbered in Figure 4 above (Email B) and will be explained in Chapter 4.

Lesson 3: Modelling 2

In Lesson 3, I helped learners to analyse the ideational and textual meanings in Email A (Figure 4 above). The analysis followed these two steps: first, learners underlined all the verbal groups in the email and split the email into clauses. In doing that task, learners paid attention to conjunctions (but, so) and the relative pronoun (that) in this underlined projected clause: 'I know that your department has been short of cars lately' (From Figure 4 above). Such conjunctions raised learners' awareness of clause boundaries.

Learners also paid attention to the fact that a clause contained only one verbal group (working as a verb) except for the 'embedded clauses' or clauses that function within the structure of 'a group', for example (Butt et al., 2000, p. 168). An example of an embedded clause from Email A is as follows (underlined): 'So please lend me one of the cars that you have in stock.' After the learners had worked in their groups, I had class feedback to learn how they perceived the relevance of the task for their daily writing. The feedback interactions were audio-recorded. They are analysed in Chapter 4.

Lesson 4: Modelling 3

Lesson 4 was the follow-up to Lesson 3. Here, learners identified other groups in Email A (Figure 4). This task excluded conjunctions and verbal groups as they had already been focused upon in Lesson 3. Learners used question words such as 'who', 'what', and 'where' and 'why' in order to identify the groups. In the clause 'The car of my department broke down this morning', for example, learners asked the following two questions, which are followed by the respective answers: (1) What? –the car of my department; (2) When?–this morning. Thus, the clause has three ideational constituents: (1) the car of my department, (2) broke down and (3) this morning. At the end of this task, feedback was provided, and interactions were audio-recorded.

Of particular interest in the analysis of ideational constituents was to focus learners' attention on the constituents chosen for the initial position of clauses. Therefore, I designed a follow-up task that focused learners' attention on thematic choices and thematic progressions (Figure 6 below). The text in this task was the one that had been used in Lesson 1. In this task, the text was organised into thematic structures. Following are the aims of the questions in the task.

In Questions 1 and 2, I aimed at raising learners' awareness of the relevance of Theme in revealing the concern of the text and the need to enhance communication. That is to say, in Figure 6, the writer has mostly repeated 'I' in thematic position, which means he is mostly concerned about himself. While the writer establishes interpersonal meaning by most

frequently repeating the first person singular 'I', he also uses other Themes that are not 'I' or 'you' (interactional Theme) in Clauses 3, 4, and 8; learners then became aware of the need to include in the initial position of the clauses, in their texts, elements that constitute information rather than only using 'I' and 'you'.

In Question 3, I aimed at raising learners' awareness of thematic progression; more clearly, effort was made to help learners understand that once the first clause is presented, the Themes of the successive clauses should refer to the first clause or other previous clauses.

Figure 6: Task on thematic choice and progression

Read the email from Miguel to Manuel again and do the task that follows. Work with your group.

Hi Manuel,

1. I'm writing to request your help.
2. I need a car to take Mr Owen from the Staff House to the international airport tomorrow morning,
3. but **the car of my department** broke down this morning.
4. So please **lend** me one of the cars that you have in stock.
5. I know that your department has been short of cars lately,
6. but I'll really appreciate it if you help me out of this situation.
7. I will tell the driver to take the freeway
8. so **the car** comes back to you as quickly as possible.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

Miguel

Task

1. Which of the words in **bold** is mostly repeated? Why do you think it is mostly used?
2. Who is the writer mostly concerned about? Justify your answer with the text.
 - a. His reader
 - b. Himself
3. From Line 2 to Line 8, are there any words in **bold** that are not related to Line 1? If yes, which ones?
 - a. Are these words related to one of the previous lines?
 - b. Which line or lines?

Lesson 5: Joint negotiation

In the joint negotiation, learners contributed ideas for constructing a text that was similar to the one that was being discussed. The negotiation was based on the instruction provided in Figure 7 below, and researcher-participant interactions were audio-recorded and transcribed (Appendix 5).

Before details of the lesson are provided, it should be noted here that the instruction for the joint negotiation contains a culture-specific component. That is, while individuals in other societies might not build their houses by themselves, in the Angolan culture they sometimes do.

To begin the joint negotiation, I asked a volunteer to act as a writer to his or her alternate, who is usually called 'back-to-back' in the target workplace. A learner volunteered and the negotiation started. To start getting contributions from learners, I asked what should be written in the subject line. Other questions followed, and learners continued giving their contributions until the joint negotiation ended. I will comment on the data obtained from the joint negotiation in Chapter 4.

Figure 7: Instruction for the joint construction

You have been on time off for four weeks, and you should start your rotation as of this Friday. However, you need at least two more days off to finish building your house.

Write an email to your back-to-back (alternate) to request him or her to keep working for two more days.

Lesson 6: Independent construction

In Lesson 6, learners wrote their email responding to the instruction in Figure 8 below. Following a procedure used by Burns (2001, p. 205), I

asked the learners to work in their groups and each group chose a scribe to record the text as it was being constructed. Each group of learners wrote the email and addressed it to another group, which in this case corresponded to the supervisor (as stated in Figure 8).

Figure 8: Instruction for the independent construction 1

You normally finish working at 4 p.m., but you would like to start finishing earlier, for example, at 3:30 p.m.

Write an email to your supervisor to request authorisation for you to start leaving work at 3:30 p.m.

At the end of the independent construction, the groups swapped their emails and commented on the aspects of the text that helped them with understanding. Then, they looked at other aspects that persuaded or did not persuade them to approve the request. Of the four texts, from the four groups, one was randomly selected by using an online 'random number generator' (Intemodino Group S.R.O., 2013). Such a text will be presented and analysed in Chapter 4 (p. 171–3).

Lesson 7: Modelling 4, writing concisely

In Lesson 7, I aimed at helping learners to write their texts concisely. *Concisely* is used here to mean avoiding unnecessary repetitions such as '7 a.m. in the morning', writing longer phrases such as 'this point in time', and writing obvious information, so that a text is unnecessarily long (Hogan, 2005, p. 208). In this lesson I attempted to respond to the suggestions proposed by the senior employees who assessed readability, in the pre-test. The following procedures were used in Lesson 7. First, I provided learners with a text that contained redundancies (Appendix 8),

and in their groups the learners worked to find the redundancies. Then, I gave class feedback to verify how able the learners were in making a text concise and how relevant they thought such a task was. The feedback was a type of joint negotiation as learners were guided step-by-step to identify the redundancies. Researcher-participant interactions were audio-recorded (Appendix 5, R6). In a follow-up task, I gave learners another text to make concise. This task was left for homework.

Lessons 8 and 9: Independent construction

Lessons 8 and 9 were aimed at revising and consolidating the contents that had been taught in the previous lessons. In Lesson 8, I started by asking learners to share their homework in groups for them to assess how well they summarised their texts. Then I asked learners in their groups to write an email to make a request, and they analysed each other's texts to see which aspects of the email were successful and which ones might need improving.

In Lesson 9, I asked learners to write another email to request three hours out of office, and this time the task was individually done. Learners addressed the email to a classmate and then swapped their emails and together discussed what the successful features were and what they felt needed to be improved. Lesson 9 marked the end of the experiment.

3.4.3.3.6 Analysis of classroom interactions

Analysis of classroom interactions was carried out by building on the procedure followed by Yayli (2011, p. 124). That is to say, I read the

recording transcripts a first, second and third time in order to sort out key themes in different interactions. The word 'theme' is used differently here from the way it was used when referring to textual meaning, in Section 2.7.3. Here it means the lesson components learners appeared to notice as the interactions happened. Once I had identified the themes, I read the transcripts again to search for regularities (the frequency of occurrence). Finally, I chose some themes to demonstrate learning as manifested in the learners' comments. Having given all the details of the work with the experimental group and the way the interactions are analysed, I now turn to the details of the work done with the control group.

3.4.3.3.7 Work with the control group

Learners in the control group did not participate in the classroom instructions, but they were engaged in their job. As was explained earlier (Subsection 3.4.3.3.1), learners in the control group were given two texts for them to read (Appendix 4), which were also used to teach the experimental group. The first text (B) was provided in Week 2, following the pre-test, and the second text (A) was provided in Week 6.

To ensure learners were going to read the texts, I gave them comprehension questions, which I checked and returned to learners. The questions for each text (A and B) are in Figure 9 below. The following subsections clarify the reason for giving learners the instructional texts, the aspects that were expected from learners' answers, and the way the answers were analysed.

Figure 9: Comprehension questions learners in the control group answered

Text B
1. How long does Marianne want to stay on holiday?
2. Would you accept the request if you were Marianne's supervisor?
3. Justify your answer in Question 2.
4. Does Marianne's email teach you any skills for your daily writing? Please specify if 'yes'.
Text A
1. Point out three differences between the email that you last read (Email B) and this one (Email A).
2. Have you written an email to make a request in the last 8 weeks?
3. If your answer in Question 2 is 'Yes', what did you request?
4. You are Manuel. Write a short response to Miguel.

The learners in the control group were given the two texts, which were used to teach the experimental group (as stated above), in order to minimise the detriment that could arise from the participation in research (BERA, 2011, Guideline 24). That is, although the learners were engaged in their job, in which they were also expected to write requests, giving them the instructional texts was necessary since the genre explicitly taught was slightly modified as a delicate request.

Besides being checked, the answers to questions were analysed to see how the learners engaged with the texts and what they noticed by themselves. In Text B, focus was given to Questions 2, 3 and 4 as these questions were about writing. That is to say, in capacity of being the approver of the request, in Questions 2 and 3 learners were expected to mention 'text-external' and 'text-internal' factors (Bhatia, 2008, p. 161–2). An example of text external-factors would be the consideration of the need to keep the business running while the employee was absent, and an example of text-internal factors would be the way the employee organised the text in terms of linguistic choices and text formatting to persuade the approver. Question 4 was more explicit than Question 2 as it asked

whether the text taught the learners something they would use for their daily writing. In brief, in the three questions, the learners were expected to notice by themselves the skills required for the request to be approved.

Text A was follow up to Text B. In this text, focus was given to the four questions as all of the questions were pertinent to the aim of the experiment. That is, Question 1 gave an insight into the learners self-noticing of linguistic choices, Questions 2 and 3 informed on the learners' involvement with request emails, and Question 4 helped learners practice making a delicate request.

Similar to the analysis of the interactions in the experimental group, the analysis of the control group's answers was made by using 'constant comparison method' (Yayli, 2011, p. 124). That is, the answers to the questions were read several times in order to sort out key themes, which were the categories focused upon.

Before turning to Chapter 4, where I analyse and interpret data, in the following section I elaborate on some methodological considerations. I particularly focus on 'epistemological' and 'ontological' considerations (Bryman, 2008, p. 13) as they might have implications for the methods chosen for the present study.

3.5 Methodological considerations: Epistemology and ontology

The methods described and explained in the present chapter reveal that in the present study I combine quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods are basically characterised by numerically quantifying data, and qualitative methods are basically characterised by providing commentaries on the data without quantifying (Hammersley, 2007, p. 78; Bryman, 2008, p. 22). In the present study, I use quantitative methods with regard to the learners' sample texts, the questionnaire to specialist informants and the learners' written products in the pre-test and post-test. With regard to learners' participation in the lessons in the experiment, I use qualitative methods.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is known to be controversial in the literature (Bryman, 2008). According to Bryman (2008, p. 606), there are 'two versions' regarding the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The first version can be termed the epistemological/ontological version, and the second version is termed 'technical version' (Bryman, 2008, p. 606).

The epistemological/ontological version suggests that quantitative and qualitative methods should not be combined in a study since they represent different views as to how social realities should be studied (Hammersley, 2007, p. 172; Bryman, 2008, p. 606). That is to say, while quantitative methods align themselves with the principle that there is an external reality on which scientists should concentrate their attention for

explaining data, qualitative methods identify themselves with the principle that there is an internal reality, which a researcher needs to understand in order to better interpret data (epistemological considerations). A further difference is that quantitative methods identify themselves with the principle that individuals are constrained by institutional regulations whereas qualitative methods are aligned with the principle that institutional regulations are constantly negotiated rather than constraining (ontological considerations) (Bryman, 2008, p. 14–8).

The technical version, by contrast, contends that quantitative and qualitative methods can be combined in a study. This combination is made in order to compensate for the disadvantages that the principles of qualitative and quantitative methods may present when used separately (Hartley & Chesworth, 2000, p. 22; Dörnyei, 2007, p. 43; Hammersley, 2007, p. 171–2; Bryman, 2008, p. 606). For example, by solely building on the principles of quantitative methods as described above, a researcher would miss useful information that could be obtained by probing into participants' perspectives on a matter investigated.

Similarly, by simply building on the principles of qualitative methods, a researcher might miss an opportunity to reach a large number of participants, and the small number would reduce the representativeness of the findings, or the fact that what is found in a sample is not the same as what is found in the population (Nunan, 1992, p. 80; Lowie & Seton, 2013, p. 78); the researcher would use a small number of participants in that qualitative methods require deep understanding of cases and commentary

on the cases, which would require a lot more time than when simply relying on the principles of quantitative methods (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 42). Considering those advantages, in the present study I have adopted the technical version in collecting data. Next is the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Chapter 4: Data analyses and interpretations

In this chapter, data are analysed and interpreted in the order they were described in Chapter 3. That is to say, first I present learners' sample texts by grouping them on the basis of communicative purposes in order to determine the genres. To determine the genres, I build on the principles of genre-based approaches, which consider communicative purposes as determining factors of genres (Swales, 1990, p. 10; Eggins, 2004, p. 56). After grouping the texts into genres, I look at one of the most frequently written genres to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the target learners in writing that genre, and with the view to supporting learners with their possible weaknesses.

After identifying the genre and the support the target learners might need with the genre, I present the data yielded by the questionnaire for the specialist informants. In that dataset, I further identify the features that are valued in the target genre with a view to including such features in the teaching practice. Finally, I elaborate on the findings resulting from the classroom interactions, the engagement of the control group while the experimental group was being taught and finally present the quantitative data obtained from the learners' written products in the pre-test and post-test (both experimental and control groups).

4.1 Learners' sample texts

The grouping of the learners' sample texts resulted in the genres that are presented in Table 8 below, which presents an example of each of the

genres identified. As Table 8 indicates, the text types the target learners write in their workplace are quite diverse. This diversity would make it difficult to cope with them all in a course that only takes 14 weeks, in a one-hour lesson daily from Monday to Friday.

However, some genres are more frequently written than others, so those genres that are more frequently written can be prioritised when teaching. For example, priorities would go to the text types that give instructions (14%), request information (21%), inform on a completed task (22%) and request a service (29%).

Table 8: Types of texts based on communicative purposes in learners' sample texts, n=114

Email purposes (genres)	Sample	Occurrence
To Inform on a completed task	Peter, I already extended the rooms for Marry Waker, John Bob and Paul Arnaldo at Alvalade Hotel until February 5. Thanks, Paulo	22 %
To inform on a schedule	Goreta, I would like you to know that, the estimated dates of our trip for the PIMOC IM Competency Development Program in USA are: Departure: 09 March 2013, Luanda – Houston, TX Return: 23 March 2013, Houston – Luanda Please advise if you need any additional information Best regards, Joaquim	2%
To inform the reader what the writer will do	Dear Steward, IT department will perform an assessment of the Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability (CIA) requirements of all solutions currently deployed on Web servers; this is required and necessary to assure compliance with Policy 575. By better understanding current solutions Confidentiality, Integrity and Availability requirements, IT department can ensure compliance with Policy 575, apply the right controls, have business continuity plans in place, that are adequate for the needs of	3%

	these solutions. Thanks, Mbuta	
To inform on a finding and express a need for information	Mr. Pola, Based on conversations we were having these days in relation to the missing chairs, we learned that the Containers came from the Warehouse and were unloaded here in Chicala Building. What We would like to know is: Who was the person responsible for putting the chairs in the Conference Rooms? Regards, Madalena	3%
To inform on a completed task and request service	Dear Roseta, The projects on the AFE's: 608877,409968,607804 had been completed in 2011 and on the AFE:808777 in 2010, means that the charges regarding to this AFE's on memo attached doesn't belongs to those projects. Please review and send us the new memo updated. We appreciate that kindly send us the invoice that generated the memo. Regards, Pablo	1%
To request information	Lapwin, Please provide the charge code ASAP. Thanks, Candeia	21%
To request a service	Pinto, Please Encode our Cash Advance. Thanks, Malunga	29%
To give instruction (please find below the link/ attached is . . . ; X is attached)	Pena, Please find attached the process that I received today from Malongo. Thanks,	14%
To refuse an invitation	Tina Thank you! but I have the weekly team meeting at 9AM Regards, Manuel	1%
To describe an object	Hi Sunday, Well come back and all the best for you in 2013. In response to your request, the MBAL model, I have to tell you that it is a model for the F1Z2A which is the lower sand of the F1 in the Central Fault Block and since you are working in the Western Fault Block	2%

	(upper sand of the F1) I think the model will not be useful for you in terms of reconciliation. Thanks! Fernanda	
To invite someone to do a task	Sunday, Could you please plan to come here in Chicala Building during this week to pick up some of the data listed below? Please let me know the date and time that best works for you. I am on the second floor and my cubicle is N3-78C. I think it would be better for us to get together for at least 30 minutes and together find within our files the data we have available that can be useful for you. Fernanda	1%
To confirm reception and promise to take action	Hello Teresa Ann, We would like to confirm the reception of the invoice, and then we are preparing the payment as soon as possible. Regards, Sebato	2%
To recommend to stop a process	Lussa, in addition to what Ricardo has said, I will recommend to stop accruing. AFE was completed since Feb-2012, by this time (9 months late) we shouldn't have any additional cost. I have listed below majority of vendors and suppliers that have billed to this AFE, and not sure whether we can following up with them in case of having later invoices. Thanks, Benvinda	1%

The text types that are presented in Table 8 may raise a concern as to what extent they are representative of the text types mostly written by the whole population (205 learners). Such a concern might arise in that only 57 target learners provided texts. Thus, the data should be interpreted with caution in that it is not known whether the frequencies would be the same if the 205 target learners provided texts.

Notwithstanding that caveat, the text types could be used as a starting point for instructing the target learners. They might particularly be useful

on the ground that the text types appear to recur. For example, although not presented in percentages, the following email types appeared in the pilot study and also appeared in the main study: 'to request services', 'to request information', 'to give instruction', and 'to inform on a completed task.' This triangulation result, therefore, suggests that the genres in Table 8, particularly the ones written most frequently, could provide a starting point for instruction.

For the purpose of the experiment, I chose an email to make a request as this genre was amongst the ones that were mostly written by the target learners. Thirty-three texts of this genre were analysed for two purposes. The first purpose was to understand how the genre looked like, that is, the moves and the linguistic features they chose, and the second purpose was to understand the aspects of their texts in which the learners probably needed support. The analyses are presented in Table 9 below.

The data in Table 9 depict the frequency (percentages) with which the steps and/or linguistic and non-linguistic realisations within the steps were used in learners' sample texts. Before the data are analysed and interpreted, it may be necessary to state that the percentages were calculated based on Numbers 33 and 83. The former is the number of learners' sample texts that were analysed, and the latter is the number of total Themes that were identified in learners' sample texts; for each step in Table 9 below, either Number 33 or 83 are written in brackets to avoid ambiguities. For example, of the 33 subject lines only three were realised

as free clauses, which are clauses that choose for MOOD, for example, 'I need your approval' as opposed to minor clauses.

Table 9: Moves, steps and linguistic realisations in learners' sample texts (n=33)

Moves	Steps	Percentages
Establishing contact	1 Subject line (n=33)	
	a. Minor clauses	90.91%
	b. Free clauses	9.09%
	2 Vocative (n=33)	
	a. Name only	45%
	b. Cordial expression ^ name	43%
	c. Cordial expression ^ no name	12%
	3 Enhancement of rapport (n=33)	
Making the request	a. Hope you are fine	3%
	b. No enhancement of rapport	97%
	1 Topic interest ^ request (n=33)	
	a. Non-reference ^ request	30%
	b. Reference ^ request	12%
	c. Request only	58%
	1.1 Linguistic realisations for the request	
	1.1.1 Modality (n=33)	
	a. Modulated statements	24%
	b. Unmodulated statements	4%
	c. Modulated questions	48%
	d. Modulated commands	21%
	e. Unmodulated commands	3%
	1.1.2 Theme	
	1.1.2.1 Thematic choice (n=83)	
	a. Informational Theme	50.6%
	b. Interactional Theme	49.4%
	1.1.2.2 Thematic progression (n=83)	
	a. Progression	59.18%
	b. No progression	40.82%
	2 Details of the request (formatting) (n=33)	
Signing off	a. In prose	40%
	b. In prose and bullet points	2%
	c. Request only	58%
	1. Reinforcement of the request	
	a. Reinforcement present (n=33)	
	• Please let me know if ...	12.12%
	• Your prompt assistance is appreciated	6.06%
	• Thanks in advance	6.06%
	b. Reinforcement not present (n=33)	75.76%
	2. Cordial sign off (linguistic realisations, n=33)	
	• Thanks	60.6%
	• Thank you	3.03%
	• Regards	21.21%
	• Best regards	9.1%
	• Sincerely	6.06%
	2.1 Writer's name (n=33)	100%

Minor clauses were defined above in the present thesis in Subsection 3.4.3.3.4 (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 100). The subject lines in the form of a free clause correspond to approximately 9 per cent. Following

are the analyses and interpretations of the findings from the texts and clarifications of some terms where necessary.

In the first move, the subject line (as a macroTheme) appears in all the texts that were analysed (100%). The contents in the subject lines were realised either as minor clauses such as 'Request for Approval', 'Request for catering service' (approximately 91%) or as free clauses such as 'I need your approval' and 'I need your support' (approximately 9%). It appears, then, that the target learners realise the relevance of a subject line in their email messages, and this finding suggests that an explicit genre instruction may only serve to reinforce their knowledge of such relevance.

The vocative, Step 2 of Move 1, indicates how the interpersonal meanings in the learners' sample texts are negotiated, and what decision can be made in teaching the target learners. The vocative in the learners' sample texts indicates that the contact between the writer and the reader is frequent, and the affective involvement is high. This tenor dimension is particularly seen in the use of 'name only' (45%) and 'cordial expression ^ name', such as 'Dear Maria' (43%), with the fewest percentages of 'cordial expression ^ no name' (12%) and 'enhancement of rapport' (3%). Enhancement of rapport is what has been called a 'brief relationship-maintaining [expression] of politeness or sociability' (Evans, 2012, p. 209).

Regarding power, a dimension of interpersonal meanings (Eggins, 2004, p. 101), the fact that the highest percentage (45%) is 'name only' prompts two interpretations. The first interpretation is that the emails were

addressed to colleagues of the same social status, in which the distance between interactants is neutral. The second interpretation is that the emails were addressed to superiors and that power relationships are not a concern in the internal written communication in the target workplace. Thus, if the second interpretation is correct, then the forms of address might not be given a great emphasis when teaching the target learners.

Before analysing and interpreting the data in the second move, I will clarify the terms used. The realisation ‘topic interest’ has been named based on the function it exerts in achieving a communicative purpose in the learners’ sample texts. That is to say, it gives an initial insight into what a writer needs from the reader although not directly expressing a request. Then, ‘topic interest’ is followed by ‘request’, and the two constitute ‘topic ^ interest’. See Figure 10 in which the topic interest has been **emboldened** and the request has been *italicised*.

Topic interest varies between ‘non-reference’ and ‘reference’. While the ‘non-reference’ only provides an insight into what the text is about (emboldened part in Figure 10 below), the ‘reference’ reminds a reader of a previous text, as seen in the emboldened part in Figure 11 below. The reference is what has been called ‘intertextuality’ (Evans, 2012, p. 203).

Figure 10: Illustration of a non-reference topic interest ^ request in a learner’s sample text

Maggi,

The contract with the Talatona Hotel (HCTA) is ready at the end of February;
please I need your help in order to send all requests for that project [. . .].
Thank you for your collaboration.

Manuela

Figure 11: Illustration of reference topic interest ^ request in a learner's sample text

Pinto,

As per our conversation this morning related to the 7 Laptops, *would you please update them according to your suggestion?*

Many thanks for your support this morning and please, let me know if is there anything I should do.

Regards,

Fefa

The examples in Figures 10 and 11 were taken from the target learners' sample texts, so the writers' and the readers' names have been replaced with pseudonyms to preserve identities.

The data in the second move, making the request, provide relevant information about mode and tenor dimensions. In mode dimension, the data indicate that the target learners sometimes discuss the content of their emails on the phone before they write it down as evidenced in 'reference ^ request' (12%).

Although this percentage is very small, it indicates that the target learners' emails have some characteristics of spoken language. That is to say, when the target learners write their emails, they may not need to give many details, which might happen if they did not previously discuss the content of the emails on the phone; most of the things they write about will have already been discussed. This evidence on mode dimension particularly manifests itself in the direct way the target learners write their emails. That is, the majority of learners' sample texts are 'request only' (58%). This datum suggests that helping the target learners write detailed texts may not be necessary.

However, the fact that the target learners learn writing and language at the same time suggests that more detailed texts can be necessary tools for teaching writing in the workplace. As the target learners are identified to mostly write requests, an email to make a delicate request may serve to help them with more detailed writing, which will help them with both writing skills and knowledge of language (English in this case).

Another mode dimension in the second move is depicted by the balanced difference between informational Theme and interactional Theme (approximately 51% and 49% respectively). This balance would suggest that Theme requires less intervention in teaching writing for the target learners. However, the balance might have resulted from the fact that the majority of the learners' sample texts were short—request only (58%). In that case, a number of Themes were realised as Process, in modulated commands. Therefore, understanding the extent to which the target learners manage informational Theme in a longer text may be necessary.

The last mode dimension in the second move regards the way in which details of the request were formatted. This dimension reveals that most texts that presented details of the request were written in prose (40%), and only 2 per cent of those texts were written in bullet points. As was mentioned above, the other texts were 'request only' (58%). Although the texts that present details are only 40 per cent, they suggest that learners are more familiar with formatting in prose than formatting in bullet points. As the impact of formatting texts either in bullet points or prose was investigated further in the questionnaire to specialist informants, a sounder

conclusion on formatting texts will be drawn when the questionnaire is analysed (Section 4.2).

In the interpersonal dimension, in the second move, most of the request proposals are politely made: modulated statements (24%), modulated questions (48%), and modulated commands (21%), with only few unmodulated statements (4%) and unmodulated commands (3%). Thus, the data confirm that the target learners have good abilities to express interpersonal meaning, a dimension that might require less attention in the classroom.

In the third move, signing off, learners' sample texts provide data on whether some linguistic and non-linguistic realisations may or may not require intervention and how the interpersonal meanings are negotiated. The first step reveals that the majority of the learners' sample texts do not have the reinforcement of the request (75%). The absence of this step suggests that either the step is optional or it is obligatory but the target learners do not realise its relevance. If it is obligatory, then it needs to be brought to the awareness of the target learners.

The linguistic realisations in the second step, in the third move, shed some light on how the interpersonal meanings are negotiated. That is to say, the contact appears to be frequent and the affective involvement appears to be high, as seen in the following approximate percentages: 'thanks' (60%) as opposed to 'thank you' (3%) and 'regards' (21%) as opposed to 'best regards' (9%) and 'sincerely' (6%).

In summary, the analyses and interpretations that have been carried out in learners' sample texts so far suggest that interpersonal meanings might not be a problem to the target learners. What the target learners might need is support with the textual meaning, as discussed with regard to the expression of mode in the learners' sample texts. The support with textual meaning might, then, help them with the readability of their texts. The target learners may also need support with ideational meaning as this meaning can be said to function together with textual meaning. That is to say, to choose Theme a writer first needs to have the ideational constituents of Participant, Process and Circumstance. The data from the learners' sample texts were reinforced with the data obtained from the questionnaire to specialist informants, and it is to the data from the questionnaire that I now turn.

4.2 The specialist informants' questionnaire

A questionnaire (Appendix 6) was submitted online to 91 specialist informants. It was composed of seven questions and its purpose was to obtain additional information on the texts written in the target workplace and the features of such texts that should be emphasised when teaching the target learners. Of the 91 specialist informants, thirty-one volunteered to participate, and their answers are analysed and interpreted below. The questions and the responses are presented in tables (10–16) and the frequencies of the responses are analysed in percentages. The specialist informants' additional responses are presented in 'Other text' options and appear exactly as they were stated. They are placed in tables in order to

help with the analyses and interpretations of data, and each table constitutes the heading of each of the subsections that follow.

Table 10: Main motivators for opening an email (n=31)

Question 1: If an email came from an employee of mine, what would quickly motivate me to open it is

	Responses	Percentage
a. the employee's name	2	6.5%
b. the content in the subject line	23	74.2%
c. Other (Please Specify):	6	19.4%
Other text		
1. Both above		
2. I try to give attention to all emails that reach my inbox		
3. all above		
4. All need to be read , grade of manager		
5. The amount of time i have available + employee name		
6. Depends on the situation. could be first in first opened.		

The data in Table 10 reveal that the content in the subject line is the motivator for the overwhelming majority of the specialist informants to open an email quickly (approximately 74%). That is, even if the responses in the 'Other text' options were added to the options in 'a' and 'b', the 'content in the subject line' would be more highly rated. For example, the responses from 1 to 4 would add one response to both 'a' and 'b' since they apparently state the same contents as those of 'a' and 'b'. The fifth and sixth responses in the 'Other text' options would only correspond to approximately 6 per cent. Thus, the content in the subject line needs to be emphasised when teaching the target learners.

It was observed from the learners' sample texts that the target learners always used a subject line in their email messages (100%), and such an observation would suggest that the target learners might not need support with the subject line. However, the target learners might not have made their choices of including a subject line with the awareness of the relevance of a subject line. Therefore, the reinforcement of the relevance of a subject line in an email message is necessary as a subject line constitutes the beginning of an email message, a part of the text that is paramount in giving a clue to what the whole text is about (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 199).

Table 11: Concern with content, grammar or both grammar and content (n=31)

Question 2: When reading a letter, memo, email, or report, I care about

	Responses	Percentage
a. the content only	5	16.1%
b. the content and the grammar	23	74.2%
c. Other (Please Specify):	3	9.7%
Other text		
All above		
content, grammar and organization of thought		
Primarily content. But poor grammar and spelling is bothersome.		

Table 11 reveals that the majority of the specialist informants value both content and grammatical accuracy (approximately 74%). This percentage would increase if the answer in the first row of the 'Other text' option were taken into consideration. That is, the percentages of 'a' and 'b' options would increase on an equal basis. The last two rows are the only answers that could be considered separately. Moreover, the percentage of 'the content and the grammar' option could increase even more as the last two

responses in the 'Other text' contain 'content' and 'grammar'. Thus, the result in Table 11 suggests that content and grammar should be given emphasis when teaching the target learners.

Table 12: Types of documents that are mostly written and read in the target workplace (n=31)

Question 3: On a daily basis, at my workplace, I mostly read

	Responses	Percentage
letters	0	0.0%
memos	0	0.0%
emails	25	80.6%
reports	1	3.2%
Other (Please Specify):	5	16.1%

Other text
a. Emails and Reports
b. In my role, I read all
c. Emails and reports
d. all of the above
e. Emails, contracts and reports.

Table 12 indicates that the overwhelming majority of the specialist informants read emails (approximately 81%), which apparently correspond to the communicative purposes presented in Table 8. This percentage could increase if the answers in the 'Other text' options were considered. That is, from the options 'a' to 'd', the only document that is different in the 'Other text' options is 'contracts'. Thus, the data in Table 12 provide some confidence about the texts written and read in the target workplace.

Table 13: Opinions on the clarity of communicative purpose and linguistic choices (n=31)

Question 4: For me, a well written letter, memo, email, or report must

	Responses	Percentage
a. explicitly clarify the purpose of the document	24	53.3%
b. use technical language	0	0.0%
c. use simple, everyday language	18	40.0%
d. Other (Please Specify):	3	6.7%
Other text		
a.	Use simple correct terminology of language - no daily slang.	
b.	short is good	
c.	Should be simple, but concise.	

Table 13 reveals that the majority of the specialist informants prefer the purpose of the texts being explicitly clarified (approximately 53%). This data suggest that learners should be taught to include a clear statement of purpose in the first step of the second move (Table 9, p. 141), so that the reader is explicitly oriented to the action to be taken.

The options 'b' and 'c' (responses **emboldened**) concern the linguistic choices. As opposed to technical language, which also has its place in business writing, simple and everyday language (40%) is what most specialist informants prefer for the documents they read. More clearly, this data suggest that, although the specialist informants can easily understand technical language, they would prefer their employees to choose everyday language when writing their emails. This apparent preference may be attributable to the fact that the target workplace continuously receives new employees, and these employees participate in email communication. They may receive email messages either as 'active communicators' (in 'To' facility) or as witnesses (in 'CC'—carbon copy—

facility) (Gimenez, 2006, p. 162), and they may struggle with the meaning of technical language. Therefore, the target learners should be taught the writing clarity that is accessible to every employee in the target workplace.

Option 'a' (response **emboldened**) should have been treated separately as it corresponds to a different level analysis. That is, while Options 'b' and 'c' deal with a linguistic level analysis, Option 'a' deals with a genre level analysis (Butt et al. 2000, p. 7). However, the fact that the linguistic level realises genre level and the two levels do not exist in isolation (Butt et al., 2000) urged me to analyse the three options together.

The answers in the 'Other text' option align with the findings obtained above concerning grammatical accuracy, as seen in 'Use simple correct terminology of language - no daily slang'. That is, the specialist informants suggest that employees' texts should be correct in terms of grammar and appropriateness. The answers also align with the finding about conciseness of a text, as seen in 'short is good' and 'Should be simple, but concise'. Thus, although those findings correspond to only approximately 7 per cent, they should require attention in the classroom teaching for the target workplace.

Table 14: Preferred forms of address (n=31)

Question 5: I like it if, in an email, an employee of mine addresses me by

	Responses	Percentage
a. my first name	18	58.1%
b. my family name	0	0.0%
c. both my first and family names	4	12.9%
d. my nickname	1	3.2%
e. any of the forms above	8	25.8%

Table 14 indicates that although the specialist informants prefer varied forms of addresses, they mostly prefer being addressed by first name (58%). This data align with the fact that in the learners' sample texts the highest percentage of the learners used 'name only' (45%), followed by those who used 'cordial expression ^ name' (43%). In these percentages, only first names were used such as 'Dear ^ first name'. Thus, these data indicate that the specialist informants do not worry about their status when being addressed. This conclusion suggests that while the role relationships should be signalled to the target learners, the signalling is not a priority.

Table 15: Opinions on the prose and bullet point formatting of texts (n=31)

Question 6: If I received the following text formats:

Text Format A

I accomplished two tasks last week. In the first task I met with our vendors at the Hotel Alvalade, and in the second task I created three learning events for Chicala Building. The two tasks were positive because our vendors were satisfied with us as customers, and the learning events reached the number of participants we were expecting.

Text Format B

I accomplished the following two tasks last week:

- Meeting with our vendors at the Hotel Alvalade.
- Creating three learning events for Chicala Building.

The two tasks were positive because our vendors were satisfied with us as customers, and the learning events reached the number of participants we were expecting.

I would prefer:

	Responses	Percentage
Text Format A	3	9.7%
Text Format B	28	90.3%
Both Text Formats (A and B)	0	0.0%

As Table 15 indicates, the overwhelming majority of the specialist informants prefer a text that is formatted in bullet points (approximately

90%). Only a very small percentage prefers texts that are formatted in prose. This finding is similar to the finding obtained in a previous study, on workplace texts, conducted by Forey (2004); Forey found that, when referring to formatting, both teachers and business informants preferred a text that was formatted in bullet points, as stated in the literature review chapter of the present thesis (p. 59). Thus, the data in Table 15 suggest that the target learners should be familiarised with formatting in bullet points and formatting in prose.

Table 16: Time the specialist informants have worked for their company (n=31)

Question 7: So far, the time I have worked for the company is within the range of

	Responses	Percentage
a. 1–5 years	4	12.9%
b. 6–10 years	1	3.2%
c. 11–20 years	13	41.9%
d. 21–30 years	9	29.0%
e. 31–45 years	4	12.9%

Table 16 indicates that the majority of the specialist informants have worked for their company for more than 10 years. This dataset provides a tentative conclusion that the specialist informants are senior enough to know the requirements of writing features that effectively meet business communication demands in the target workplace. However, caution should be exercised here as the correlation analysis needed to be elaborated further. An example would be to ask the specialist informants how they felt about their knowledge of the workplace writing when they started to work and how they feel now.

In summary, all the data obtained from the questionnaire, together with the ones obtained from learners' sample texts, can be tentatively used to

assess the effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing for the target learners. However, it should be recognised that an exploratory analysis of texts such as the one undertaken in the present study may yield a large number of insights difficult to use in only one experiment. For example, the analyses of learners' sample texts and the specialist informants' questionnaire suggest that the target learners should be helped with Theme choices (informational and interactional), thematic progressions, text formatting, grammatical accuracy and conciseness in writing.

While those insights may be necessary for improving the target learners' texts in the target workplace, exploring all of them in a short experiment such as the one undertaken in the present study may be difficult. Therefore, in assessing the readability of the target learners' texts in the experiment, the present study only focus on the allowable order of moves, thematic choice and thematic progression. The data from the experiment are presented and interpreted in the next section.

4.3 Data from the experiment

This section contains two subsections. The first subsection qualitatively analyses and interprets the results of the learners' participation in the lessons during the experiment, and the second subsection analyses and interprets the data from the learners' written products (pre-test and post-test).

4.3.1 Learners' participation in the lessons

The experiment was conducted based on the teaching stages described by Hyland (2007, p. 159), namely 'setting the context', 'modelling', 'joint negotiation' and 'independent construction' as was explained in Chapter 3. Therefore, the presentation and interpretation of the findings from the experiment focus on those stages and follow the order in which the lessons were explained in Chapter 3.

Lesson 1: Setting the context

As was clarified in Chapter 3, the first lesson raised learners' awareness of register variables of 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode' (Butt et. al, 2000. p. 9; Halliday, 2007 [1975], p. 134). In this subsection, I present learners' comments and use **R** for **recording** and **L** for **Line**, accompanied by respective numbers in Appendix 5. More specifically, in presenting comments I particularly focus on the contents of Emails A and B, the component of the emails that help a reader to quickly identify the communicative purpose, and the role relationships between the people involved in the communication (Figure 4, p. 122).

The transcript of the first recording (R1) indicates that learners had no difficulties in identifying what the emails were about. The learners said the emails were about 'transportation request' (R1, L1–4). Of particular interest for readability was the fact that 'transportation request' was in the subject line, and it helped learners to quickly identify the purpose of the emails, as they unanimously concluded (R1, L10–24). Furthermore, two learners made the following two comments: (1) *[. . .] also the subject should actually tell what the email is all about* (R1, L20), and (2) *[. . .] just by reading the*

email we should have an idea that what we are going to need is this and that (R1, L22).

This finding aligns with the finding obtained from the questionnaire that was sent to the specialist informants. That is, the specialist informants indicated that the subject line was the main motivator for quickly opening an email. Here, the learners in the experiment also identify the subject line as the main pointer to the identification of the purpose of the email message. Thus, the role of subject line here sheds some light on Matthiessen's (1995, p. 26) consideration of 'textual metafunction' as an enabling resource for organising a text, and the focus on the subject line appears to reinforce the learners' knowledge. The reinforcement may make learners more aware of the role of a subject line when writing their emails, so that not only will they always include it in their emails but also make it specific to the email they write.

The identification of who wrote and who received each email was straightforward as the learners only had to look at 'From' and 'To' components or facilities of the emails. What they found challenging was to pick examples from the emails to show which of the writers had a close relationship with their reader. However, learners' interactions in groups appeared to yield positive results as they unanimously chose Email A (R1, L38). They gave examples such as 'Hello' as opposed to 'Dear' (R1, L45–55), and the use of the unmodulated statement 'I need' (R1, L80), as opposed to a modulated statement such as 'I *would* like'.

When I asked learners about the lesson they learned from the differences between one email and another, they expressed their awareness by saying that they learned how to vary their language according to their audience. This awareness is evidenced in the following comments: *we have to understand when we send emails for a close friend or someone that we know or to someone that you don't know, for instance for someone that we don't know* (R1, L108–10). Another learner commented: *For me, that, eh, I didn't pay attention when I'm writing to someone that I don't know when I am writing an email* (R1, L118). This last statement suggests that although the learner on occasions got her text right in her daily writing, she was not aware of the rhetorical choices that were involved in the communication.

The data obtained here indicate the positive effect of learners' engagement with the rhetorical and linguistic levels of the texts (Emails A and B). That is to say, the interactions focusing on the texts reinforced the learners' awareness of 'macroTheme' (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 199) and the fact that linguistic choices should be appropriate to a context of use. Regarding the tenor dimension, the data here suggest that although learners were able to compose their texts by using modulation (as was seen in learners' sample texts, Table 9, p. 141), they did not do that with a 'keen awareness' of rhetorical features (Cheng, 2007, p. 303). Thus, in terms of the tenor dimension, they might be more successful with their writing after they have attended the lessons in the experiment.

The findings from the interactions in the first lesson align with the findings on tenor dimension identified in learners' sample texts and the ones

identified in the questionnaire to specialist informants. More clearly, in the learners' sample texts learners were found to use 'name only' in the vocative, which indicates a close relationship; in the specialist informants' questionnaire, most respondents also preferred to be addressed by their first name. The alignment with that tenor dimension is evidenced in the following comment:

My supervisor, I have a supervisor [who] is American, and when he writes an email to me, he he say 'Pablo'. My name's Pablo. Do this, and that. And when I I reply the email to him, I say 'Fred' I did this, his name is 'Fred'. And he [doesn't] worry about that (R1, L146).

This comment confirms the fact that a tenor dimension in the form of address might not be a great concern when the target learners are taught.

To sum up, it can be said that the first lesson was fruitful to both learners and me. It raised learners' awareness of rhetorical and linguistic choices appertaining to a given context, and learners had an opportunity to recontextualise their genre knowledge, which might maximise success with their workplace writing. The first lesson provided me with an opportunity to confirm the findings that were previously obtained in the present study.

Lesson 2: Modelling 1

In this subsection, I report the findings that resulted from the identification of moves and their aims. I also report on the learners' engagement with distinguishing obligatory from optional moves.

Lesson 2.1 Identification of moves and aims

To start identifying moves, I asked learners to work in their groups and look for the organisational parts they thought composed Email B. Email B was already presented in the last chapter (Figure 4, p. 122), but it is presented again in Figure 12 below for illustration. After working in their groups, learners unanimously concluded that the parts were 'introduction', 'development' and 'conclusion'. Learners here acted in the way they act when identifying parts of a text in Portuguese compositions. For the SFL analysis, however, parts of a text need to be 'functional' (Eggins, 2004, p. 61). That is, learners needed to identify parts that are specific for the target genre, particularly by focusing on what each part is doing to contribute to the achievement of the purpose of a text as a whole.

Therefore, I presented Email B with its moves discriminated for the learners and conducted a talk with the whole class (Appendix 5, R2). In the talk, I prompted learners to understand what the writer was doing in each move and the names that each move could receive.

The first move was named **content of the request** and learners noticed what it was doing by using the terms 'summary', 'topic', and 'message' (R2, L12–17). The second move was identified as **greeting**. Learners had no difficulties identifying what it was doing as they unanimously said 'the greeting' (R2, L20).

Figure 12: Illustration of moves

Email B

From: Lopez, Marianne
To: Dawson, Sylvia
Cc:
[1] Subject: Request for extended leave

[2] Dear Ms Dawson
[3] I am getting married in December and as my fiancé and I are planning a long trip for our honeymoon, I would like to request extended leave as follows: **[4]**

Month and year	Week Nos.	Holiday status
December 2013	50-52	Three weeks annual holiday for 2013
January & February 2014	1-5	Three weeks annual holiday for 2014 plus two weeks unpaid leave.

[5] I realise that this is an exceptional request, but I would be very grateful if you could grant this leave. **[6]** My extended absence can be unpaid. Alternatively, I can work an extra hour when I return until I complete the time I owe the company.
[7] I look forward to hearing from you.
[8] Best regards,
[9] Marianne

The third move was **the reason for writing the request**. The identification of this move was not straightforward as learners were still stuck with the term ‘introduction’ (R2, L22). When I insisted on what the move actually was, learners suggested the terms ‘concern’, ‘plan’ and ‘the reason’ (R2, L28, 30–32). These terms appeared more specific to function than the term ‘introduction’. The fourth move was **details of the request**. This move also created some difficulties for learners as the learners still suggested the term ‘development’ (R2, L40). However, my insistence on what the real meaning of the move was prompted them to suggest more functional terms such as ‘clarifying details’, ‘timing’, ‘summary’, and ‘data’ (R 2, L41–47).

The fifth move was named **supportive statement**, based on the ‘Linguistic Politeness Theory’ described by Lam (2011, p. 362) as a device that raises awareness of the effects a directive or request can cause to the

person addressed. This move aims to soften the request by showing empathy with the reader. In the case of the target genre, the writer shows an understanding of the possible implications of being offered the service—approval for an extended absence. For this move, learners used the term ‘conclusion’ again (R2, L53). However, soon they appeared to perceive the aim of the move as a learner commented: *he expresses that he, he realises that this isn’t easy* (R2, L63).

The sixth move was straightforward for learners, but the seventh move was initially difficult for them. The sixth move was named **negotiation of the request**. In this move, the writer suggests the way of compensating for the absence. Learners quickly noticed the aim of the move as is seen in the term they used in order to describe it (to deal) (R2, L83–94). The seventh move was named **reinforcement of the request**. Here the writer gives an extra urge to the reader toward complying with the request. The identification of this move was initially hard for learners as they still suggested the term ‘conclusion’ (R2, L99). As previously, I insisted that learners needed to look at what the writer was doing in that part of the text. Then, they suggested the term ‘feedback’ or ‘feedback request’ (R2, L109). This last term suggests that learners were starting to have a grasp of the aim of the move: to reinforce the request by demanding feedback.

The eighth and the ninth moves were respectively **closing** and **signature**, the two of which can be steps of a ‘sign off’ move (analysis that was carried out in learners’ sample texts, Table 9, p. 142). It is necessary to clarify here that for the analysis of moves with learners in the classroom, I

did not make a distinction between moves and steps; some steps were considered moves in order to facilitate the understanding of functional parts in the genre. The identification of those moves (**closing** and **signature**), which characterise the move terms in the ESP genre tradition as seen in the studies by Henry and Roseberry (2001, p. 159) and Flowerdew and Wan (2006, p. 135), was straightforward; only a few learners tended to call the closing 'greeting' (R2, L121). A learner suggested the term 'a kind of goodbye' (R2, L123). This term is similar to closing, so the eighth move was called either closing or goodbye. For the ninth move, learners unanimously agreed with the term 'signature' (R2, L129).

In short, it can be said that if learners know the moves in their texts and the aims of each move, they may be more likely to succeed with their workplace writing. That is, for each move they write, learners will be thinking about the contribution the move gives for the achievement of the purpose of a text as whole.

Lesson 2.2 Obligatory moves versus optional moves

The first move (content of the request) was the starting point, and learners unanimously agreed that it was obligatory. Learners said that it stated the aim and helped to prioritise an email (R2, L141–4). A learner was more specific on this: *by, by having the content, I can I can decide I need to start with this one. It is very important* (R2, L146). Based on this comment, I reinforced the fact that it should be specific to the purpose of the text if it was to meet the effect of its obligatory status.

In the second move (greeting), learners had two moments of reactions. The first reaction was that the move could be optional, particularly when dealing with people who are close to each other (R2, L158–164). The second reaction was that it should be obligatory in the genre that was being discussed since it served as a psychological preparation for the person who would approve the request (R2, L165–9). The following comment from a learner made all the learners agree that the move was obligatory:

Because if you just started, well, this is my concern; so, do this. I need this. So, it sounds like you are trying, trying just to demand this person or you just, you know, to scaring him' (R2, L171).

The status of the third move (reason for writing the request) was straightforward as learners unanimously agreed that an email should always have a reason. This agreement was evidenced from a comment that a learner made in the following terms: *actually when you write an email, you have a reason. You have to maintain it* (R2, L201–3).

The fourth move (details of the request) was initially seen by a group of learners as optional (R2, L210). In response to that reaction, I elicited the impact there would be if that move was absent. Another group responded with laughter and commented: *maybe he will reply back and ask you 'what are you looking for?'* (R2, L213). This comment was so convincing that all the groups agreed with the obligatory status of the fourth move.

The fifth move (supportive statement) was initially seen by a group of learners as obligatory. When I asked other groups, a group stated that the presence of such a move depended on the type of email (R2, L219–221) and that for the email discussed, it was optional. Agreement was then reached that the fifth move was optional.

The sixth move (negotiation of the request) was immediately identified by all the groups as obligatory for the target genre. When responding to the question regarding the impact the move would have, a group of learners made the following comments:

Yes. Your supervisor or superintendent will see that he is actually willing to support us and also even by, you know, having to receive or to receive he is willing to assist us (R2, L233–7).

Therefore, an agreement was unanimously reached that the sixth move was obligatory.

Regarding the seventh move, reinforcement of the request, learners had discrepant views as to whether it should be obligatory or optional. While a group said it should be obligatory (R2, L247), another group said it should be optional (R2, L249). Then I made clear to learners that if the previous moves were well written, the reader would not have difficulties complying with the request; then a conclusion was drawn that the move was optional.

The eighth and the ninth moves ('closing' and 'signature' respectively) were unanimously agreed upon as obligatory because, as learners implied, they signalled respect. When referring to the effect of the closing,

for example, a learner from a group said: *the person who the person who, you know, you communicate with sees respect* (R2, L265). Other groups kept on commenting that it was necessary to have a closing in order to thank the reader (in advance) for the service being requested (R2, L279–286). It was evident, then, that learners perceived the cajoling nature of the target genre, in which the more polite the writer was, the more likely the reader would approve the request.

To sum up, the classroom interactions in Lesson 2.2 came to a conclusion that the genre was composed of seven obligatory moves and two optional moves. The optional moves were the fifth and the seventh (Figure 12 above). This conclusion differed from my initial analysis as I felt that ‘the signature’, Move 9, was optional based on the fact that by looking at the ‘From’ facility, it might be clear who wrote the email.

However, learners mentioned two examples that prompted an obligatory status of Move 9. The first example was that some employees have a shared email, so in the ‘From’ facility only appears the shared email—not the name. It is, therefore, necessary to sign the email in order for the reader to immediately identify who wrote the email (R2, L297–317).

The second example (captured through note-taking) was what had happened to two learners. When replying to an email, they used a name that their reader did not like. If their reader had signed their previous email, they would have indicated how they preferred to be called; the writer could have chosen the name preferred by the reader. The last accounts,

therefore, clarify how the learners' contributions shaped my initial distinction between obligatory and optional moves.

In Lesson 2, I attempted to raise learners' awareness of generic features, particularly the fact that each move plays a significant role in achieving a communicative purpose. I also focused on the need for some moves to be present in the target genre and for the others to be optional. Learners are then expected to build on the knowledge they gained in order to write their texts more successfully.

On the other hand, it can be recognised that the task that was carried out in Lesson 2 was only a rehearsal to show learners that any texts they write have moves and each move plays a role in achieving the overall communicative purpose (Henry & Roseberry, 1998, p. 147; Eggins, 2004, p. 61). In a more sophisticated analysis, learners could be helped to analyse a large number of texts (20 or 30 for example) in order to determine obligatory and optional moves in a genre.

Lesson 3: Modelling 2

In Lesson 3, I prompted learners to analyse the ideational and textual meanings in Email A (Appendix 5). To begin, as was clarified in Chapter 3, I gave learners a task in which they first identified verbal groups and then split the text into clauses. In the feedback on the task, the interactions of which were audio-recorded (Appendix 5, R3), I learned that learners perceived the relevance of the task for their daily writing; that is, they made two comments that indicated the analysis helped them to write texts that make sense. The first comment was as follows: *this will help us to*

determine like the, whether our re, our writing has, make sense or not. You can understand it or not (R3, L8). Another comment was reminiscent of the knowledge learners gained when analysing moves. This comment referred to a step-by-step process in writing: *Yeah I think will, will help us to think step, step by step* (R3, L10). Thus, the comments suggest that the lesson raised learners' awareness of writing texts that make sense; learners appeared to understand that a clause needs to have a process and a text is a sequence of clauses that are logically connected. That awareness is expected to help learners when they write their texts.

Lesson 4: Modelling 3

Lesson 4 was a follow up to Lesson 3. In this lesson, I helped learners to identify other groups of the clauses in Email A (Appendix 4) by using question words such as 'who', 'what', 'why' and 'where'. When referring to these questions, a learner made the following comment: *Yes. I think those, those are the questions that they will be asking himself to make, understand the message* (R4, L19). Another learner commented that if you fail to answer all the questions, *you will be receiving phone calls* (R4, L28).

The comments on Lesson 4 indicate quite clearly that learners grasped the conditions for the readability of their texts. That is, learners appeared to have understood that when we are writing, we are answering questions and for us to meet our readers' expectations, we need to answer all our reader's potential questions. Thus, they might build on that knowledge when writing their workplace emails.

Lesson 5: Joint negotiation

The data on joint negotiation is presented in this subsection in two components. In the first component, I present the interactions that happened during the joint negotiation, and in the second component I present the text that resulted from the joint negotiation.

At the beginning of the joint negotiation, learners were so enthusiastic that they were willing to contribute ideas, and, at this point of the experiment, they indicated their familiarisation with the need to make appropriate linguistic choices as seen in their choice of 'Hi' in the form of address (R5, L23). That is, they probably chose that form of address because they knew the writer was addressing his or her alternate (with the same role relationship). It might have been worth asking them why they chose 'Hi' as such a question might have provided additional insights into their awareness of linguistic choices. However, the question was not asked due to the pressure of the interactions; admittedly, not having asked that question at the beginning of the joint negotiation constitutes a limitation here.

As the interactions continued, learners also revealed their familiarisation with genre-level analysis. For example, they realised that the statement of request should come first as the following two learners commented. The first learner said: *Because I I I need to say first what I'm, what I have the problem* (R5, L52), and the second one said: *Now we need to have a deal* (R5, L89).

Figure 13: A text that resulted from the joint negotiation in the experiment

From: Pablo, A.
To: Walker, L.
Cc:
Subject: Extra days request

Hi Lusso,
At this moment I'm building my house, and it will take me two more days to finish.
Therefore I'm requesting if you could cover for me for two more days.
I know it's hard to stay longer than 28 days, but your cooperation with this matter is helpful. I'm renting a house at the moment and the rent has gone higher. I can stay four more days beyond my normal schedule.
Looking forward to hearing from you.
Thanks,
Pablo

At the end of the joint negotiation, every learner was nodding, and such nodding suggested that learners saw the email that was negotiated as a powerful tool for getting things done through language (Callaghan et al., 2012, p.192). Of particular manifestation of this perception was a learner's decision to use the email if he has a concern next time (R5, L210). The email that was jointly negotiated is in Figure 13 above.

In summary, Lesson 5 indicates that learners enthusiastically contributed their ideas in negotiating the text although the text may require improvement. During the negotiation of the text, I considered all the learners' ideas and only slightly shaped them in order to organise the text. Thus, as it resulted from an effort to consider the learners' contributions, the text does not exhibit perfection.

During the joint negotiation, teacher-talk dominated, and that dominance may be regarded as detrimental. In other words, learners should talk more

than the teacher should in a foreign language learning classroom as learners have few opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom. However, maximisation of teacher-talk was necessary at this point of the experiment as learners needed to be prompted to contribute ideas; that is to say, I had to ask as many questions as possible in order to obtain contributions to the task. The joint negotiation was a phase in which learners were being prepared to engage in an independent construction and eventually do more talking in their groups.

Lesson 6: Independent construction

The independent construction resulted in four texts that the four groups constructed, and one of the texts (randomly selected) is presented in this subsection. As a starting point, the instruction that learners followed in construction their texts is reiterated as follows:

You normally finish working at 4 p.m., but you would like to start finishing earlier, for example, at 3:30 p.m.

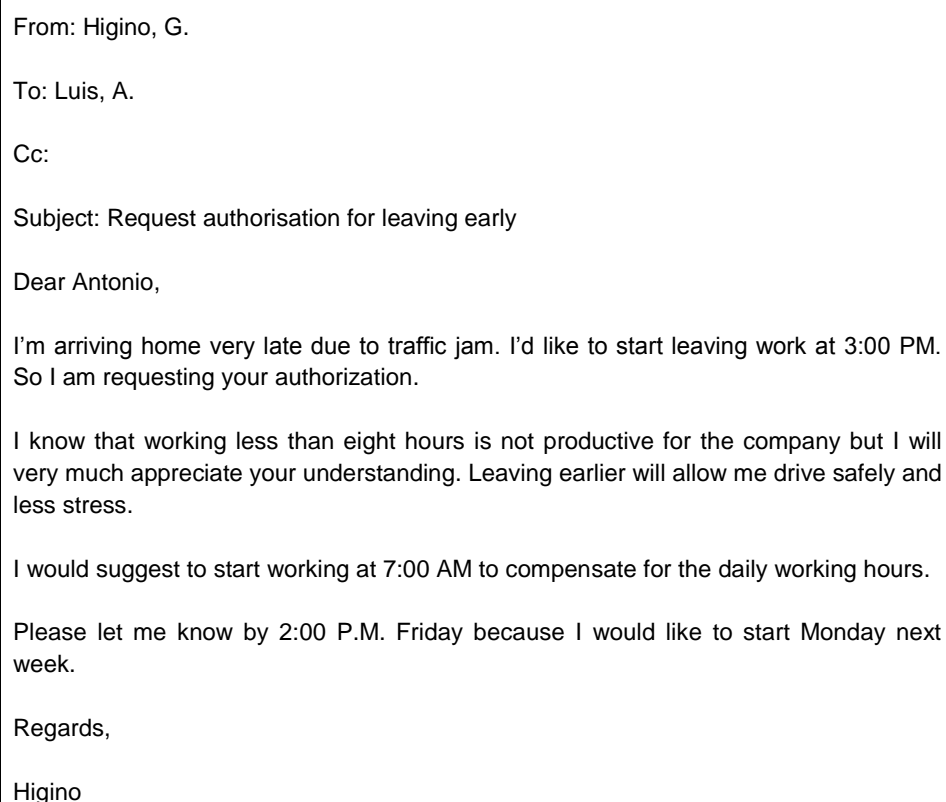
Write an email to your supervisor to request authorisation for you to start leaving work at 3:30 p.m.

The text learners wrote responding to the instruction is depicted in Figure 14 below, which indicates that learners have made an attempt to include all the moves as were identified in Lesson 2. The text can be said to succeed in the following four components.

Firstly, it uses informative words in the subject line: 'request authorisation' and 'leaving early'. By reading the wording in the subject line, the reader

will immediately know the requirement of the text. In fact, two learners noticed this need of the quality of a subject line when they discussed the obligatory and optional nature of moves. The first learner said: *[. . .] also the subject should actually tell what the email is all about* (R1, L20); the second learner said: *[. . .] just by reading the email we should have an idea that what we are going to need is this and that* (R1, L22). Thus, from this subject line, learners indicate to have recontextualised their ‘generic awareness’ as defined by Cheng (2007, p. 303).

Figure 14: Independent construction outcome



From: Higinio, G.

To: Luis, A.

Cc:

Subject: Request authorisation for leaving early

Dear Antonio,

I'm arriving home very late due to traffic jam. I'd like to start leaving work at 3:00 PM. So I am requesting your authorization.

I know that working less than eight hours is not productive for the company but I will very much appreciate your understanding. Leaving earlier will allow me drive safely and less stress.

I would suggest to start working at 7:00 AM to compensate for the daily working hours.

Please let me know by 2:00 P.M. Friday because I would like to start Monday next week.

Regards,

Higinio

Secondly, learners clearly specify the problem and the cause of the problem (*I'm arriving home very late due to traffic jam*) and politely formulate their request (*I'd like to start leaving work at 3:00 PM*). This beginning can provide the reader with clarity and can influence him or her to be

empathetic. Thus, the reader can easily and empathetically understand the message and provide the service the writer needs.

A third component that can emphasise the achievement of the purpose is the inclusion of the supportive statement—‘I know that [. . .]’—and the suggestion to find ways of compensating for the absence. The reader can see how the requester is interested in advancing the business although he will be away.

Fourthly, learners write a time-bound feedback request (*Please let me know by 2:00 P.M. Friday*), a reinforcement of the request, so that the reader knows when to reply. From this time-bound feedback request, the reader may perceive the urgency of the request and the requester might achieve the purpose of his writing—to persuade the boss to let him start leaving work early.

On the other hand, the text in Figure 14 presents some problems that need to be improved. One of the problems concerns the order and connection of clauses. For example, the paragraph that follows the vocative could be improved as follows: *I’m arriving home very late due to traffic jam. So I am requesting your authorization to start leaving work at 3:00 PM.* Instead of placing the statement of the request at the end of the paragraph, they could have placed it straight after the non-reference statement. Therefore, instead of having three clauses connected by full stops, they could have two clause complexes.

Another problem regards consistency as is seen in the expressions '3:00 PM' and '2:00 P.M.' While they do not use full stops in the former, they do in the latter. However, such problems may not prevent learners from making the meaning they wish to make with their text. Thus, they can be said to have achieved their communicative purpose.

Regarding the linguistic features, learners appear to have done very well as is seen in Figure 15 below. In Clauses 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7, they have used Theme iteration; in Clause 6, they have used zig-zag thematic progression and in Clause 8, they have used derived thematic progression. Derived thematic progression here is the 'Process' referring to the action of 'you'. The text also contains two informational Themes, namely 'leaving earlier' and 'let'. The independent construction, then, reveals how valuable the genre and linguistic level analyses of the target genre have been to the learners in the experiment.

Figure 15: Theme and thematic progression in the independent construction

1. I'm arriving home very late due to traffic jam.
2. I'd like to start leaving work at 3:00 PM.
3. So I am requesting your authorization.
4. I know that working less than eight hours is not productive for the company
5. but I will very much appreciate your understanding.
6. **Leaving earlier** will allow me drive safely and less stress.
7. I would suggest to start working at 7:00 AM to compensate for the daily working hours.
8. Please **let** me know by 2:00 P.M. Friday because I would like to start Monday next week.

The choice of Theme in Figure 15 requires some considerations regarding readability. As explained in the literature review of the present thesis,

informational Theme can maximise readability and interactional Theme can maximise rapport (Martin, 1986, referenced in Berry, 1995). In the text written by the target learners in Figure 15, more interactional Themes are noticeable than informational Theme, thus indicating that the text might lack in readability.

However, learners have made appropriate linguistic choices as far as the requirement of the text is concerned. That is to say, the writer expresses the concern about himself, and he is constrained to mostly choose 'I' in thematic position. What remains to be known is whether such a choice impedes readability, particularly in the target workplace.

Lesson 7: Modelling 4, writing concisely

In Modelling 4, I attempted to respond to the needs expressed by the specialist informants and the assessors in the pre-test. That is, the specialist informants and the assessors of readability suggested that a text should be concise. In responding to that suggestion, I designed a task (Appendix 8) in which learners made a text concise. After working within the procedures described in Chapter 3 (Lesson 7), learners revealed that the task helped them to write a shorter text and therefore reduce the work of their reader. For example, a learner made the following comment: *If I'm reading a text and looks like everything is repetitive, I may stop by then* (R6, L26). This comment was shared by a number of learners, and the comments are in alignment with the assessors' suggestions.

During the task, focus was made on proofreading. That is, learners were made aware that after they have written their texts they need to proofread

to ensure no information is unnecessarily repeated. Learners particularly noticed the fact that when a text is concise it becomes short and clear as is seen in the following comment: *I think the reader will be happy because eh the message is short and clear* (R6, L12). This last comment raises a question as to whether learners' sample texts were short because learners needed to make them concise.

However, learners' additional comments shed some light on why most of the learners' sample texts were short. A learner from a group said: *and think we, when the text is short, we can avoid mistakes* (R6, L11) and a learner from another group also said: *yeah but when we write more words, we can make more mistakes* (R6, L21). These comments provide a tentative conclusion that the target learners partly write short texts because they are afraid of making language mistakes. Thus, the data reinforce the argument that the target learners should be helped with a longer text (requiring elaboration) in order to help them with writing and language learning at the same time.

When learners are taught to write concisely, they might confuse between concise writing and short writing. To avoid such a possible confusion, I made it clear to learners that making a text concise did not mean leaving out information a reader needs; the reader needs to be given every piece of information he or she needs to comprehend a text. In a follow-up task, I gave learners another text to make concise, and the task was left for homework, as was stated in Chapter 3.

Lessons 8 and 9: Independent construction

As was stated in Chapter 3, in Lessons 8 and 9 I revised and consolidated the contents that had been taught in the previous lessons. These two lessons revealed that learners were able to split a text into clauses and functionally analyse constituents of each clause. They were also able to comment on each other's texts by saying which aspects made a text successful and which ones needed improving. Thus, those abilities gave some indications of the learners' understanding of the features that were focused upon during the nine lessons in the experiment. The following subsection elaborates on the findings from the control group.

4.3.2 Findings from the control group regarding instructional texts

Analysis of the answers to questions for Texts A and B indicated that learners in the control group were engaged with the texts and were able to notice some aspects that could probably help them with their writing. The analysis also indicates that learners wrote emails to make requests during the time the experiment was taking place. More on these findings is provided in the following subsections by focusing on the themes that emerged from the analysis.

In Questions 2 and 3 of Text B (p. 132 of the present thesis), learners were asked whether they would accept the request and why. Analysis of the answers provided the following factors influencing their decision: willingness to compensate for the absence, compliance with the company

rules, an employee's key job responsibility, number of requests received, and the time of the year the request is made.

Willingness to compensate for the request was seen as the employee's flexibility to accept either to be given time away without payment or to work extra hours when she is back on the job. This theme is more precisely seen in the following two answers: (1) *Although she is going to honeymoon, she will work an extra hour when she returns;* (2) *I would accept the request because she promised unpaid time.* This theme corresponded to approximately 28 per cent of the 18 learners.

Compliance with the company rules manifested itself in the learners' feeling of the need to follow the guidelines set by the company. In fact, when situations of this type happen in the target workplace, in which an employee is excused from work, reference is usually made to the company policies. This feeling is brought into evidence in the following answer: *Well, if I was a supervisor, I would accept the request but then I would justify to my manager. I also need to check the company policy.* This theme was one of the most recurring in the analysis of Questions 2 and 3 (approximately 33%).

An employee's key job responsibility was another theme that recurred with some frequency (approximately 17%). In this theme, learners tended to imply that while some employees could be easily excused from work, some employees could not. These employees are those who hold leadership responsibility. Example of this difference in terms of an employee's status can be seen in the following answer: *I would probably not*

agree with her because she might be an important worker or the only person in position. If she stays away for long no one will replace her. This difference in terms of status suggests that the higher the position an employee holds, the more sophisticated the request should be in order to be accepted.

Abundance of requests and the time of the year the request is made were the least recurrent themes in Questions 2 and 3. That is, each of the themes recurred only approximately 5 per cent. In the theme of abundance of requests, a learner said: *I would like to accept, but unfortunately the company has received too many requests.* This learner appears to allude to the fact that requests are mostly made in the target workplace, so that if a leader had already received several requests, he or she would probably be reluctant to approve more requests.

The theme on 'the time of the year the request is made' recurred 12 per cent and was evident in the following answer: *No, I wouldn't accept because January and February are the months we are planning in detail what will be the strategy for the next twelve months and everybody is busy.* This statement suggests that an employee would need to be more persuasive when requesting in January or in February than when requesting in June or in July. In short, the answers to Questions 2 and 3 suggest that learners think there are many text external factors that can help a delicate request to be accepted.

Learners also noticed a number of text-internal factors in Question 4, which asked the benefits they got from the texts they read for their daily writing. The factors manifested themselves in the following four factors: (1)

learning of a particular linguistic expression, (2) communicating strategically, (3) leaning English in general, and (4) learning to write in general.

Particular linguistic expression learners noticed were 'extended absence' and 'I look forward to hearing from you.' This theme also included linguistic choices that signalled politeness, as seen in the following answer: *The way very politely she is requesting to her boss there are really good words on it. Also the sentence 'I look forward to hearing from you.'* The recurrence of this theme was approximately 17 per cent.

Communicating strategically was one of the most recurrent themes (approximately 44 per cent). Examples of this theme is seen in the following answer: *I learned how to send an email to my supervisor and it was very clearly on the statement regarding months and years, weeks also, the holiday status.*

Leaning English in general (approximately 6%), and learning to write in general (also approximately 6%) were the least recurrent themes in Question 4. Learning English in general manifested itself in the following answer: *It was an opportunity to learn about reading related to English.* An example of learning to write in general was as follows: *Yes, always learning new things is important, so this will be a way to familiarize with other writing skills.* Other answers in Question 4 (approximately 28%) provided no clarification of what was learned. That is, learners only said they learned something that could help them with their daily writing, but they did not specify what they learned.

As well as in Text B, in Text A (Figure 9, p. 132) learners in the control group indicated engagement with the texts although only 16 of them answered the questions. In Question 1, learners were able to point out differences between Text A and Text B as seen in the following two Learners:

Learner 1:

1. Email A requests transport but Email B requests extended leave.
2. In Email A the reason for request is that the car is broken and in Email B the reason for request is that she had fewer days and needed more.
3. In email A the trip is company responsibility but Email B talks about employee responsibility.

Learner 2:

1. Email B is formal but Email A is not formal.
2. Email A requires a business need, but Email B is about a personal need.
3. In this Email (A) we can find some abbreviations while in the first one (B) we found expressions like could, would, and no abbreviations.

Most importantly in Questions 2 and 3, fourteen of the sixteen learners who answered the questions reported to have written requests: five learners requested transport, five requested products and four requested approvals.

In Question 4, learners also took time to respond to Miguel, the writer of Email B. For the sake of space in the present thesis, not all the responses have been illustrated here, but two of them (randomly selected) have been

illustrated below (Learner 1 & Learner 2) to demonstrate that learners were engaged with the texts.

Learner 1

Subject: Transport request

Hi Miguel,

I'm sending the car right now as per your request, so take care of that and when you finish please send it back to me.

Thanks,

Ngunga (pseudonym)

Learner 2

Subject: Request of transport

Dear Miguel

I would like to let you know that your request was approved so the car is available for this issue.

Best regards,

Manuel (pseudonym)

In Texts A and B, learners were able to notice the text-external factors and text-internal factors by themselves, and this noticing would suggest that both experimental group and control group would progress with their writing on an equal basis. However, learners in the control group were not made aware of the reasons for the choices made in the texts with which they were engaged. Furthermore, they were not explicitly supported with the moves in the texts and how a text could be structured step-by-step in order to answer the questions a reader may have. This lack of explicitness

was seen to make a difference between the experimental group and the control group as will be seen in the quantitative results.

4.3.3 Quantitative results from learners' texts: Pre- and post-tests

This subsection presents the quantitative results of the measures of readability, informational Theme and thematic progression that were assessed in the pre-test and post-test (Table 17 below) for both the experimental group and the control group. As the results were calculated from the raw data, details of such raw data are in Appendices 9, 10 and 11, with the exception of the data about informational Theme, presented in Table 19 below.

Table 17: Significance test of the gains participants made from Test 1 to Test 2 (n=18+18)

Measure	Experimental group		Control group	
	z-value	significance ($p \leq 0.01$)	z-value	significance ($p \leq 0.01$)
Readability	-2.84	0.00	-2.10	0.04
Moves	-2.59	0.01	-0.31	0.76
Informational Theme	-2.59	0.01	-2.42	0.02
Thematic progression	-1.87	0.06	-1.59	0.11

The results in Table 17 indicate that, in the readability scores assessed by senior employees, the experimental group had more gains than the control group did: $z=-2.84$, $p=0.00$, two-tailed and $z=-2.10$, $p=0.04$, two-tailed respectively. That is, while the result of the experimental group is statistically significant at the alpha level set for the study ($p \leq 0.01$), the result of the control group is not significant ($p=0.04$). Thus the null

hypothesis of no difference between the result of the group of learners taught with an explicit genre-based approach and the one of the group of learners involved in an implicit genre-based approach can be tentatively rejected in the measure of readability.

However, caution should be taken in interpreting the result of readability in Table 17 due to the following interrater reliability scores that were calculated by using 'Cohen's kappa coefficient' (K) (Bryman, 2008, p. 265): Experimental group, Test 1, $K=0.179$, Test 2, $K=-0.111$; Control Group, Test 1, $K=-0.008$, Test 2, $K=0.059$. As Bryman explains this coefficient, it varies from 0 to 1, and the more it approaches to 1, the stronger the interrater reliability is. The values of K are classified as follows: 0.75 or above is 'very good', between 0.6 and 0.75 is 'good', and between 0.4 and 0.6 is 'fair' (Bryman, 2008, p. 265). They are further classified in the 'Help' menu of MedCalc Version 13.1.2 (2014) (Table 18 below).

Table 18: Values of Kohen's kappa coefficient, a table copied from the 'Help' menu of the MedCalc Version 13.1.2.

Value of <i>K</i>	Strength of agreement
< 0.20	Poor
0.21 - 0.40	Fair
0.41 - 0.60	Moderate
0.61 - 0.80	Good
0.81 - 1.00	Very good

The interrater reliabilities in the pre-test and the post-test in the present study, therefore, are placed within the 'poor' scale and the statistics prompts the following two interpretations. First, the assessors needed training on how to assess the tests. Second, although they had similar work experience, the fact that they were from different linguistic

backgrounds (English and Portuguese) might have contributed to the disagreements. Thus, the readability scores provided by senior employees, in Table 17 above, need to be interpreted with caution.

The result from the measure of readability was explored further in order to gain insights into whether the assessors' judgements were influenced by the organisation of moves, choice of informational Theme and thematic progression. The result of the exploration was aimed at indicating whether focusing on the allowable order of moves, choice of informational Theme and thematic progression would be a worthwhile pursuit in future teaching endeavours. As seen in Table 17, for the experimental group the allowable order of moves was significant at the alpha level set for the study ($p \leq 0.01$), that is to say, $z = -2.59$, and $p = 0.01$, two tailed. By contrast, for the control group the result was not significant, that is, $z = -0.31$, $p = 0.76$ two tailed. Thus the null hypothesis of no difference between the experimental group and control group can be tentatively rejected in the measure of allowable order of moves.

The result on the choice of informational Theme was also significant at the alpha level set for the study for the experimental group. That is to say, the z -value is -2.59 , the p -value is 0.01 , and the result is significant at $p \leq 0.01$. By contrast, for the control group the result on the choice of informational Theme was not significant. More specifically, for the control group the z -value is -2.42 , the p -value is 0.02 , and the result is not significant at $p \leq 0.01$, two tailed. Thus the null hypothesis of no difference between the

experimental group and control group can be tentatively rejected in the measure of informational Theme.

However, the statistical significance of the choice of informational Theme for the experimental group requires further considerations as learners still mostly tended to choose interactional Theme in the post-test. This tendency is evident in Table 19 below in which the informational Theme in the post-test (abbreviated as Info 2) was less than the informational Theme chosen in the pre-test (abbreviated as Info 1), in most cases.

Table 19: Scores on the choice of informational Theme in Test 1 (Info 1) and Test 2 (Info 2)

Participants	Experimental group		Control group	
	Info 1	Info 2	Info 1	Info 2
1	4	1.11	5	0
2	6.67	3.33	4.29	0
3	3.57	5	9	0
4	7	4.45	3.33	7.14
5	4	1.43	4.17	1.82
6	5	0	8.89	2
7	4.29	2.5	6	0
8	5.56	1.43	6.25	2.14
9	6	2.5	0	2
10	10	3.33	3	4.49
11	2	1.11	3.33	0
12	2.86	1.43	4.9	2.22
13	2.5	1	3.33	0
14	8.75	2	3.75	2.5
15	0.52	2.14	2.86	0
16	6.67	3.75	2.5	2
17	0	10	1.43	5
18	4.71	0	6.67	3.75

The participants' tendency to choose interactional Theme is further illustrated in Table 20 below, in which a participant in the experimental group scored 8.75 points in the pre-test and only scored 2 points in the post-test (See Participant 14 in Table 19).

Table 20: Textual Illustration of thematic choice in pre- and post-tests

Pre-test	Post-test
<p>Dear (Lukenia)</p> <p>I am writing this email to request from you a car transport which will support Mr. Owen our colleague from USA. <u>He</u> came here to train young engineers from my department.</p> <p>Unfortunately <u>the car that was supposed to take him to airport</u> is broken.</p> <p><u>his flight</u> will depart from Luanda tomorrow morning at 7 AM,</p> <p><u>he visa</u> will expire tomorrow afternoon</p> <p><u>which</u> mean that he have to leave Angola tomorrow before noon</p> <p>otherwise <u>he</u> will pay a big penalty,</p> <p>and <u>this situation</u> also can cause some issue on our company relation with government.</p> <p>Regards,</p> <p>Catumbela</p>	<p>Hi Lukenia,</p> <p>I'm writing this email to request a special favour from you.</p> <p>I have been on vacation for about 3 weeks, to resolve a personal problem, and I would like another vacation week because it is required four weeks to finish the problem. And <u>because the problem affects me a lot, I cannot stop.</u></p> <p>otherwise I will be obliged to leave work again, <u>which</u> will require another 4 weeks.</p> <p>I know that I have a high work load this moment, but I already talked to Emanuel Bless to take care of this during my absence.</p> <p>I look forward to receiving your permission</p> <p>Best regards,</p> <p>Catumbela</p>

Despite this tendency to mostly choose interactional Theme, which might have been attributable to the fact that learners had to express a concern about themselves, learners still left some informational Themes in their texts (Table 19) in the post-test. Thus those few informational Themes probably played a role in rendering the texts written by the experimental group more readable ($Z = -2.84$, $p = 0.00$) than the texts written by the control group ($z = -2.10$, $p = 0.04$). An alternative conclusion can be that although the choice of informational Theme reached statistical significance for the experimental group, for an email to make a request interactional

Theme appears to be more appropriate and that its abundant presence in the learners' texts did not impede readability.

Contrary to the results of readability, allowable order of moves and informational Theme, the results of thematic progression were not significant for the experimental group and control group. That is, for the experimental group z-value is -1.87, the *p-value* is 0.06, two-tailed, and for the control group the z-value is -1.59, and the *p-value* is 0.11, two-tailed. Thus the null hypothesis of no difference between the results of the experimental group and control group cannot be rejected in the measure of thematic progression.

Although the results of thematic progression were not statistically significant, thematic progression should be given attention in teaching writing as it is recognised to make a text cohesive, coherent, and readable (Berry, 1995; Butt et al. 2000; Eggins, 2004; Lirola & Smith, 2009). Such attention might be particularly relevant as the target learners were found to write a variety of text types. More clearly, the analysis of thematic progression might be significant from the perspective of readability when teaching other texts (with purposes such as 'to give information' and 'to give instruction') that were identified in learners' sample texts (Table 8, p. 139). Thus, the data in Table 17 suggest that the allowable order of moves, choice of informational Theme and thematic progression may need particular attention for readability when the target learners are taught with an explicit genre-based approach.

Besides being given instructions on the allowable order of moves, informational Theme and thematic progressions, learners were instructed to more appropriately express their ideational meanings and write concise texts. For example, learners were explicitly instructed to answer all the potential questions that their readers might have, and they were instructed to avoid writing unnecessary information so that their reader could economically navigate through their texts. Although instructions on these last components were not statistically assessed, they probably influenced the senior employees in providing readability scores and ultimately the advantage exhibited by the experimental group over the control group.

The advantage of the experimental group over the control group is enhanced by the fact that the two groups were given equal opportunities to access the texts that were used for classroom instruction. Furthermore, in the second text that was distributed to the control group, 14 of the 16 learners who answered the comprehension questions revealed that they had written requests in the past 8 weeks. Thus, the fact that the genre was slightly modified for the teaching purpose did not constitute a disadvantage over the control group in terms of having access to the target genre during the experiment; the results, therefore, prompt a tentative conclusion that an explicit genre-based approach could be more fruitful than the implicit genre-based approach in teaching writing for learners of English as a foreign language in the target workplace.

In summary, the present chapter has shown how learners gained the knowledge they need to be successful with their workplace writing when

taught with an explicit genre-based approach. This knowledge manifests itself in the learners' comments that indicate understanding of

- relationships between content, purpose and audience,
- the experiential and textual meanings that maximise the readability of their text, and
- the need to write concise email messages that help a reader to save time and energy in a busy-work environment.

Knowledge gained also manifests itself through the texts learners wrote as assessed by the two senior employees of the target workplace, and evidenced by assessing the allowable order of moves and informational Theme. The findings are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the findings and limitations of the study

In the present study, texts were analysed and an experiment was implemented in order to assess the effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing for learners of English as a foreign language in their workplace. This chapter discusses the results from the analysis of the text types the target learners write, the specialist informants' views of the features that can make a text successful and the effect of an explicit genre-based approach. The chapter ends with limitations, which focus on the aspects of the research that were not pursued in the present study but might have provided different findings, and suggests ways in which the study could be improved.

5.1 The main text types written in the target workplace: Genre analysis

The present study built on genre theory, which 'stresses the social context and communicative role of language' (Callaghan et al. 2012, p. 180). As such, the most common texts that are written in the target workplace were sought and communicative purposes such as 'to request a service', 'to inform on a completed task' and 'to give instructions' (Table 8, p. 138) were identified and analysed with two aims. The first aim was to determine the genre and linguistic features. That is, the stages through which the target learners go in achieving their communicative purposes and the linguistic features they choose were analysed. The second aim was to find out the text features that the target learners appeared to get right and the

features with which they appeared to need support. In a nutshell, the analysis of texts provided information that could be used to support learners with contextual knowledge and to help them be more successful with their written communication than they were.

Genre analysis is carried out to identify the organisation of moves and the linguistic features chosen by expert writers (Henry & Roseberry, 1998; Hyland, 2007). However, the texts that were analysed in the present study were written by the target learners, who are not expert writers of the genre. Thus, a question may arise as to what extent the analysis that was carried out could be a worthwhile pursuit. The merit of analysing the texts written by the target learners can be seen in the fact that the writers were already engaged in the job, they had been working for more than three years and had a habitualised way of going through achieving their communicative purposes (Eggins, 2004). What they needed was to perfect the way they wrote in the target language, so that they could communicate more successfully.

It is true that collecting texts from expert writers in the target workplace would have been more illuminating in terms of moves organisation and linguistic choices, but it would probably not have been straightforward to identify the features with which the target learners needed support on their daily writing. The analysis of the texts written by the target learners facilitated the immediate identification of the aspects that appeared to need intervention and an initial plan for intervention was made.

5.2. Text features valued in the target workplace: The specialist informants' views

The text features that are valued in the target workplace were identified through a questionnaire to specialist informants, who answered general questions about writing in the target workplace. The specialist informants' views were relevant as the informants are the potential readers and evaluators of the texts written by the target learners. The next subsections explain four features that appeared to be valued in the target workplace.

The first feature was the need to have an informative subject line as this component of an email was indicated by the specialist informants to be a crucial motivator for an email to be opened and read on a timely manner instead of being forgotten and probably deleted. The specialist informants' views of the subject line is substantiated in the literature in the following terms: 'the subject line of an e-mail informs the recipient of the e-mail content and, depending on the message, may affect the decision to view the e-mail instead of treating the e-mail as spam and deleting it' (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005, p. 380–1). The datum on the essence of an email subject line was particularly informative to the genre analysis in the present study as the target learners would need their emails to be quickly opened and read to achieve their communicative purposes on a timely manner. Subject lines were identified to be present in all the texts written by the target learners (Table 9, p. 142), but it was necessary to raise learners' awareness of the essence of such email components as emphasised by the specialist informants.

The second feature was the specialist informants' preference of the use of clear presentation of the purpose of a text. That is to say, learners should directly express what they need before going into details to justify the need. This way of expressing the purpose is differently made in different contexts (Ding, 2006; Evans, 2012), that is, some cultures prefer 'directness' whereas other cultures prefer 'indirectness' (Evans, 2012, p. 208). In the culture of the target workplace directness was found to be preferable, and therefore the insights gained from the specialist informants helped support the target learners with the expectation of their readers.

The third feature was the specialist informants' concentration on both content and grammar when reading a text. As was discussed in the literature review (Section 2.10), simultaneously concentrating on content and grammatical accuracy is not observable in all workplace contexts. That is, while both content and grammatical accuracy are given equal values in written communication in some workplaces, only content is given primacy in other workplaces (Hollis-Turner & Scholtz, 2010; Evans, 2012). Thus the finding on the specialist informants' preferences to focus on both content and grammar served as a significant element in attempting to help the target learners.

The interaction between the target learners and the specialist informants is that of internal communication, but the learners might also carry out external communication. In other words, not only might the target learners write for people in their workplace, but also for people out of it. These people's concern with the quality of the texts may be different from that of

the internal readers. In this respect, by working from the perspective of reader's evaluation of the writing quality, the present study should have considered the outsiders' view of the texts written by the target learners. However, all the texts that were collected from the target learners were of internal communication, and this evidence meant that the possibilities for the target learners to communicate with outsiders were very few. Thus, from the perspective of helping learners with the requirement of the target workplace, the specialist informants' preference to focus on content and grammar was a relevant datum to genre analysis in the present study.

The identification of the preference to focus on content and grammar in equal measure was carried out as follows. Preference for content was partly identified by focusing on formatting a text in prose or in bullet points, and the specialist informants were found to prefer a text that was formatted in bullet points. The identification of the views on grammatical accuracy was made on a general basis, using general and traditional grammatical terms as the specialist informants were probably going to have difficulties in deciphering specialised terms such as Theme, thematic choices and tense, which are 'particular to the field' of linguistics (Eggins, 2004, p. 108). However, the specialist informants appeared to have a grasp of what was meant by the term 'grammar' and provided useful insights, as was seen in their answers: 'content, grammar and organization of thought'; 'Primarily content. But poor grammar and spelling is bothersome' (Table 11, p. 150).

The fourth text feature was the linguistic choices made in the forms of address such as 'Dear', 'Hello/Hi' followed by a title, or simply the use of a name, which would indicate different ways of tenor dimensions (Eggins, 2004). The specialist informants valued the form of address that used 'name only' (Table 14, p. 153), and this datum helped to understand that the specialist informants were so close to their subordinates that they did not worry about formality. Lack of this datum would lead a teacher to misinterpret a learner's text that addressed a supervisor by 'name only'; that is, the teacher would consider the form of address as inappropriate and would probably award it a low score if in the process of marking tests. In fact, the analysis of linguistic features in the learners' sample texts (Table 9, p. 142) suggested that if the target learners wrote to their supervisors then they had a problem with appropriateness. However, the analysis of the specialist informants' responses clarified the reason for the choices made by the target learners when writing their texts.

Thus, although the analysis of the questionnaire data focused on general text features, the four features that appeared to be valued in the target workplace informed genre analysis to some extent. The text features that were identified in the questionnaire, together with the analysis of the texts the target learners wrote on the job, were helpful in sketching a concrete and meaningful plan that was used to carry out the teaching intervention.

Before the result of the teaching intervention is discussed in detail, it may be useful to say that the search for the text features through the specialist informants' questionnaire also helped to triangulate the findings that had

been previously obtained. That is, the target learners were found to mostly write email messages, and the specialist informants also revealed that they mostly read email messages on a daily basis.

Another finding the questionnaire triangulated was the fact that despite the different preferences across different workplaces (the one studied by Hollis-Turner & Scholtz, 2010, and the one by Evans, 2012, for example), some similarities may exist. For example, the specialist informants were found to prefer a text that was formatted in bullet points (Table 15, p. 154) and a similar finding was obtained by Forey (2004), who discussed workplace texts with teachers and business people in Hong Kong and found that both business people and teachers preferred a text that was formatted in bullet points. Such possible similarities are probably the reason for a number of researchers to carry out genre analysis, which can help potential users (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Flowerdew & Wan, 2006; Sadeghi & Samuel, 2013). However, it is argued in the present study that text analysis should be undertaken for each particular context before the teaching is carried out.

5.3 The effect of an explicit genre-based teaching

The findings in the present study shed some light on the effect of an explicit genre-based teaching. That is to say, the results that learners in the experimental group achieved appear to be attributable to a number of tasks that were carried out in the classroom. Firstly, learners explicitly discussed how language varies with context, how each part of a text functionally contributes to the achievement of the overall purpose of a text,

and how a text is structured clause after clause in order to make sense. Secondly, they learned constituents of clauses so that they were able to choose a constituent for the first position of a clause in order for their text to make sense to a reader. Thirdly, they learned how to make a text concise, and at the same time they learned to provide all information required to facilitate reading.

While learners had been writing on a daily basis and had succeeded with their writing, they possibly enhanced their knowledge after being instructed with an explicit genre-based approach. This possible enhancement manifests itself in the following comment made by a learner: *For me, that, eh, I didn't pay attention when I'm writing to someone that I don't know when I am writing an email* (R1, L118). This comment is reminiscent of 'recontextualisation', which is defined as 'learners' abilities not only to use a certain generic feature in a new writing task, but to use it with a keen awareness of the rhetorical context that facilitates its appropriate use' (Cheng, 2007, p. 303). More importantly, the result of learners in the experimental group changed positively from pre-test to the post-test as was measured in the scores of readability (provided by senior employees).

Additional measures, namely allowable order of moves, the choice of informational Theme and thematic progression (Table 17 above, p. 184), were used to determine whether they influenced the scores provided by senior employees. The measure of allowable order of moves was statistically significant at the alpha level set for the study ($p \leq 0.01$); that is, z-value is -2.84, p-value is 0.00, two tailed. Similarly, the measure of the

choice of informational Theme appeared to be statistically significant although learners mostly chose interactional Themes. While interactional Themes appeared to be more relevant for a request, learners' texts in the post test were still left with some informational Themes, so that the difference between informational Theme in the pre-test and informational Theme in the post-test were statistically significant; that is, z -value is -2.59 and p -value is 0.01, two tailed. Contrary to the allowable order of moves and the choice of informational Theme, thematic progression in the present study indicates no positive influence on the target learners' improvement of their texts, that is, the statistical analysis indicated that z =-2.42, p = 0.02, two tailed.

However, thematic progression has been recognised to make a text cohesive and easy to read (Butt et al., 2000; Moore, 2006; Guijarro & Zamorano, 2009). So the results on thematic progression may be explained by the texts that were written by learners in the pre- and post-tests, as was mentioned in Chapter 4 (Section 4.3.3). That is to say, the texts required learners to write about their personal problems and in both the pre- and post- tests they were constrained to mostly choose 'I' and 'you' in thematic position. In that respect, very little difference between the texts written by learners in the experimental group and the texts written by learners in the control group was observable.

Another explanation for the result of thematic progression in the present study may be provided with reference to previous studies. As was seen in the literature review, thematic progression was found to reveal no

significance after a student had been instructed, and the result was attributable to the difficulties that Theme probably caused to learners of English as a second language and to the short time used to instruct the learner (Ho, 2009). Similarly, the present study was conducted with learners of English as a foreign language, and the learners were only provided with nine lessons (one 60-minute lesson per week).

As the learners made progress with the readability of their texts, although they mostly chose 'I' and 'you' in thematic position, the result suggests that the effect of thematic progression on enhancing readability should be a concern for future research. That is, thematic progression in the present research was assessed by using short email requests, but future research should assess its effect in longer workplace texts such as an audit report.

The progress made by the experimental group, as a result of explicit genre-based teaching, is substantiated by the use of a control group. That is, the learners in the control group were exposed to the target genre in their daily work, and were given the texts with which the experimental group worked, but their result reached no significance at the alpha level set for the study ($p \leq 0.01$). The fact that the learners in the control group were exposed to the target genre in their workplace and had access to the instructional texts gave an expectation that the results of both experimental and control groups would be equal. This expectation was raised on the basis of the suggestion made by some researchers in the NRS genre tradition, that is to say, genres do not need to be explicitly taught in order to be learned (Freedman, 1993; Dias, 1994, referenced in

Hyon, 1996, p. 709). However, the experimental group outperformed the control group as was seen in Table 17 above (p. 184). Thus, genres need to be explicitly taught if learners are to be helped with their writing in the target workplace. In the next subsection, alternative explanations of the results achieved by the control group are provided.

5.3.1 Alternative explanation of the results: Control group

Two alternative explanations can be provided for the fact that the control group did not reach statistically significant results at the alpha level set for the study ($p \leq 0.01$). The first explanation concerns the time the experiment took, as was mentioned above with reference to the experimental group. That is, for learners to gain knowledge in the exercise of their job, they might need more than nine weeks. The need for this additional time is hypothesised because the result achieved by the control group almost approached significance within the alpha level set for the study. The approximation was particularly seen in the measures of readability assessed by the senior employees ($z = -2.10$, $p = 0.04$, two tailed) and evidenced in the measures of the choice of informational Theme ($z = -2.42$, $p = 0.02$, two tailed). Briefly, the result of the control group might also be significant if the time is increased.

The second alternative explanation is about the teaching context. More clearly, the experiment was used with learners in a foreign language context, but the control group was organised on the basis of the NRS genre-based approach, which has been used with highly educated university students, who are mostly native speakers of English (Hammond

& Derewianka, 2002, p. 187). While native language speakers might only struggle with text organisation, foreign language speakers might struggle with both text organisation and language learning (Yasuda, 2011, p. 115). It can be hypothesised then that the control group might achieve positive results if the experiment is conducted with native speakers of English. Despite that caveat, an explicit genre-based approach appears to have merit for the target workplace, and the next subsection focuses on the merit.

5.3.2 The merit of the explicit genre-based approach for the target workplace

Despite the alternative explanations of the results presented above about the control group, the results indicate that an explicit genre-based approach should be the pedagogic tool of choice for teaching learners in the target workplace. For example, the target workplace gives very little time to new and old employees (5, 9 or 14 weeks) to learn English in the classroom as was seen in Chapter 3. It can be said that such a time constraint can be overcome by using a teaching approach that accelerates learning such as an explicit genre-based approach. In fact, Hyland (2007, p. 151) argues that a 'genre-based writing teaching can short-cut the long processes of situated acquisition', and this argument is supported by the fact that the experimental group outperformed the control group in only nine weeks.

The findings of the present study suggest that the learning of writing in the target workplace needs to be reinforced if learners are to be provided with

sufficient knowledge within the time they are given to study. Such reinforcement can be provided by explicitly raising learners' awareness of language meanings. Towards this end, a SFL genre-based approach can be a solution as indicated by a number of previous researchers (Hyland, 2007, p. 154; Martin, 2009, p. 11; Walker, 2010, p. 78; Yasuda, 2011, p. 111). The SFL tradition analyses and focuses learners' attention on genre stages and linguistic meanings such as ideational and textual, which appeared to be playing a role in the judgements of readability assessed by two senior employees in the target workplace.

5.4 Limitations of the study

Although the study has achieved significant results, it can be identified to have three limitations. The first limitation concerns the collection of learners' sample texts. That is, 205 learners were expected to provide texts, but only 57 of them provided the texts, which correspond only to approximately 28 per cent of the whole population. If compared to the classifications provided by Mangione (1995), that percentage of the texts (below 50%) would be simply 'not acceptable' as far as representativeness is concerned (Bryman, 2008, p. 219). Thus although the texts collected provided an insight into the text types most frequently written in the target workplace, the result of the analysis needs to be taken with caution.

The second limitation regards the search for the text features that are valued in the target workplace. As was stated above, the text features that are valued in the target workplace were sought through a questionnaire that was submitted to 91 specialist informants. Of this number of specialist

informants, only 31 answered the questionnaire. This number corresponds to approximately 35 per cent, and similar to the percentage in learners' sample texts, the result needs to be interpreted with caution from the perspective of representativeness. More importantly, the respondents were recruited on a voluntary basis, and this way of recruiting participants is said to provide less representativeness (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 101; Bryman, 2008, p. 187; Lowie & Seton, 2013; p. 54).

Another point regarding the search for the text features valued in the target workplace is that focus was made on general features of email genres such as subject line, salutation, content and grammatical accuracy. While these general features provided an insight into what the workplace assessors expected from their employees, they said very little about an email to make a request, which was the focus of the experiment. This limitation could be overcome by including in the questionnaire more questions about nonlinguistic and linguistic features that would be thought to make a request successful. Alternatively, the analysis made in learners' sample texts could be supplemented with a collection of request texts written by the specialist informants and these texts could be analysed in terms of moves and linguistic features to inform the teaching practice. In fact, the use of texts written by experts to understand nonlinguistic and linguistic features valued in a context is the common practice in an explicit genre-based approach (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Hyland, 2007).

The third limitation concerns the assessment of learners' written products in the pre-test and post-test. That is, in the measure of readability by the

senior employees, agreements between assessors were very poor as was seen in the measures of interrater reliability by using Kohen's kappa coefficient (Bryman, 2008, p. 265). Furthermore, the study only assessed allowable order of moves, the choice of informational Theme and thematic progression in the learners' written products. While the assessors were probably influenced by those measures, they might also have been influenced by other measures such as tense, subject-verb agreement and punctuation, which were not assessed in the present study.

In summary, this chapter has discussed the results that were achieved in the present study by focusing on the factors that probably contributed to the achievements. Focus was first made on two components: the texts that are frequently written by the target learners and the text features that are valued in the target workplace. Analysis of these two components provided an insight into what the target learners needed to improve for their effective writing. Focus was then made on the measures that were assessed in the teaching component, and the analysis of the measures revealed that an explicit genre-based approach might be more suitable for the target workplace than an implicit genre-based approach. That is to say, the explicit genre-based approach promoted quicker learning than the implicit genre-based approach did as evidenced with the learners who were only engaged on the job (control group). Last, but not the least, it has been demonstrated in the present chapter that despite the positive findings obtained, caution should be exercised as the study carries with it several limitations. General conclusions of the study, together with the

implications of the findings for teaching practice and research, are provided in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and implications

The present chapter presents conclusions and implications of the study, namely implications for teaching practice and implications for further research. In the implications for further research, the chapter also identifies future research questions.

6.1 Conclusions

The present study was an attempt to assess the effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching writing for learners of English as a foreign language in the context of a workplace. By building on the theory of language as a social process (Martin, 2012), the study explored the context in which the learners were writing and implemented a teaching experiment in order to gauge the extent to which learners would indicate improvement of their writing. As genre-based approach was seen to be used in different traditions (ESP, SFL & NRS) (Hyon, 1996; Flowerdew & Wan, 2010), the traditions were first explored and a conclusion was reached that the traditions would be divided into two facets, namely an explicit genre-based approach (represented by the ESP and SFL traditions) and an implicit genre-based approach (represented by the NRS genre-based approach). The present study particularly explored the effect of an explicit genre-based approach and used the implicit genre-based approach as a control variable.

Before the teaching experiment was implemented, the context of the workplace was investigated by exploring the texts the target learners wrote

in order to determine the genre, and the learners' strengths and weaknesses in writing the texts. More specifically, the study first aimed to explore the types of texts the target learners wrote in the workplace, and the exploration came to a conclusion that learners mostly wrote email messages, which constituted a variety of genres, but some genres were more recurrent than others. So, one of the most recurrent genres, an email to make a request, was used in order to assess the effect of an explicit genre-based approach. The emails to make requests were further analysed, and the analysis concluded that learners were strong in expressing interpersonal meaning, but they appeared to need support with ideational and textual meanings. So these meanings were given emphasis in the teaching experiment.

Another component that was analysed prior to the teaching experiment was the text features that were valued in the target workplace. That is, the study secondly aimed to understand the text features that the expert writers in the workplace valued. The analysis was made on a general basis, but it provided conclusions that informed the analysis of learners' texts. Among many conclusions, the analysis revealed the need to raise learners' awareness of the relevance of an email subject line, the reason for the learners to use the forms of addresses they used, and the need to focus on both content and grammatical accuracy when teaching the target learners. This last revelation meant that learners needed to learn how ideational and textual meanings were expressed in an English text, with a particular emphasis on an email to make a request.

The teaching experiment was the core of the present study and comprised the third research question, to which the first two questions were heading. The first two research questions entailed the stages of 'planning', which was then followed by 'sequencing learning', 'supporting learning' and assessing learning (Hyland, 2007, p. 148). That is to say, the collection of texts and the specialist informants' views of the text features valued in the target workplace were part of planning. Sequencing learning comprised the use of the SFL genre pedagogy, particularly in the stages of 'setting the context', 'modelling', 'joint negotiation' and 'independent construction' (Hyland, 2007, p. 159; Callaghan et al., 2012, p. 181).

Supporting learning happened when learners were engaged in the stages of modelling, joint negotiation and independent construction. Learners interacted with each other in groups and also interacted with the researcher. In other words, learning was supported by two types of interactions: 'borrowed consciousness'—which characterised researcher-participant interactions, and 'shared consciousness'—which characterised participant-participant interactions (Hyland, 2007, p. 158). The double support the learners received, then, means that sufficient scaffolding was provided in order to guarantee success with written communication.

Assessing learning was carried out in two components. The first component entailed learners commenting on each genre feature that was taught in the stages outlined above. In their comments, learners revealed that they were becoming aware of the relevance of genre and linguistic level choices in constructing their texts. Such knowledge was confirmed in

the learners' understanding of varying language with different audience, providing every piece of information a reader needs to understand a text, ordering moves in an effective way, and writing a text concisely in order to save the reader's time.

Furthermore, learners' knowledge was confirmed in the second component of assessing learning, in which learners' pre-test and post-test results were compared. Learners in the explicit genre-based approach ended up presenting superior results to the results presented by the control group. Thus, despite the limitations that were pointed out above, the study reveals that an explicit genre-based approach might be a methodology of choice for helping the target learners with their workplace writing. More succinctly, the analysis of learners' sample texts and the text features that are valued in the target workplace, and the implementation of the teaching experiment provided useful findings that have implications for teaching practice and research.

6.2 Implications

The present study has indicated several implications that can be taken into consideration for teaching practice and research. The implications are presented in the subsections that follow.

6.2.1 Implications for teaching practice

Three implications for teaching practice have been identified. The first implication concerns the fact that a teacher should provide learners with the knowledge they need to use in their 'discourse community' or the

context of their workplace (Swales, 1990, p. 23, Hyland, 2007, p. 149). When teaching learners who are not employed yet, a teacher may have difficulties in meeting learner needs as learners in a class may aim to work in different discourse communities. In the Angolan context, for example, learners of petroleum engineering may work in different workplaces that explore oil and gas when they finish their studies. While the teacher can use a textbook that explores oil and gas to help learners in the class, the textbook may not take into account the different rhetorical and linguistic choices that are preferred in different workplaces. A concrete example is seen in Parks' (2001) study (in the literature review), which referred to Francophone nurse interns learning nursing care plans, but found that the use of such nursing care plans was resisted in the hospitals where the learners went to work as interns.

However, when teaching in the context of a workplace, a teacher may find it easy to provide knowledge learners need as learners are already engaged in their job. The teacher can collect routine sample texts from learners or more expert writers in the workplace and then he or she can analyse the texts with the purpose of helping learners. In other words, instead of solely relying on textbooks designed for teaching purposes, the teacher can conduct need analysis in order to supplement the contents in textbooks.

Some textbooks appear very specific to different workplaces such as 'English for Finance', 'English for Oil and Gas', and 'English for Human Resources Management'. Nevertheless, they may not meet very specific

communicative purposes such as *requesting services* and *making invitations*. These very specific communicative purposes emerge in workplaces such as Finance, Oil and Gas, and Human Resources, and they can only be known by analysing texts or contexts in which they emerge.

The second implication regards the fact that teachers who wish to base their teaching on learners' specific needs will also take into account the notion of audience. That is, they will identify to whom the learners write and will involve this audience in determining success factors in a written document, a point that resonates with Forey (2004) and Bhatia (2008).

Even if they are part of the institution in which they carry out a study, teachers might find it useful to conduct a piece of research on learner needs as taking knowledge for granted may sometimes result in deficiencies. For example, although I work for the institution in which the present study took place, I only knew that learners mostly wrote email messages after I had requested the documents from the target learners. Furthermore, I only became aware of the specific communicative purposes and the linguistic features of the documents after I had undertaken an analysis of texts. These possible deficiencies in obtaining knowledge are probably why Hellawell (2006, p. 488) suggested that a researcher should be on 'an insider-outsider spectrum'.

The third implication resides in the fact that, when teaching genres, teachers in the target workplace may find it useful to focus on whole texts and help learners with moves and linguistic choices. Instead of using

publications such as the Headway Series as the main textbooks, teachers might use them as supplementary material. By proceeding that way, teachers prioritise learner needs. Teachers may also find the learners' comments on the lessons useful as such comments appear to reinforce learners' assimilation of genre features.

6.2.2 Implications for further research

Apart from providing implications for teaching practice, the present study provides implications for further research. One notable implication resides in the analysis of texts in order to find out the aspects with which learners in a particular context need support. Studies analysing texts for that purpose have been widely carried out in the literature (Henry & Roseberry, 2001; Flowerdew & Wan, 2006; Bhatia, 2008; Sadeghi & Samuel, 2013), but they have concentrated on the texts written by experts. The present study has extended the analyses to the texts written by learners in the target workplace so that it was possible to immediately identify the learners' strengths and weakness. The analysis of learners' texts was supplemented with the expert writers' views of what writing features were valued in the target workplace, but analysis of the expert writers' texts would probably have provided more substantial insights. Thus future studies should set out to investigate the impact of analysing both learners' and expert writers' texts in research designed to improve workplace writing.

The present study has highlighted the relevance of an explicit genre-based approach and therefore emphasises the studies conducted in this area of

research (Cheng, 2007; Myskow & Gordon, 2010; Yayli, 2011). These studies, however, did not use a control variable suggested by the NRS genre tradition, which states that genres do not need to be taught in inauthentic classroom, but should only be learned by osmosis (Hyon, 1996; Hyland, 2007). As stated earlier, the present study used a control variable and supported Hyland's (2007) argument that an explicit genre-based approach would shorten the long period of time that the learning by osmosis might take. However, to determine the precise effect of an explicit genre-based approach, the present study needed to add one more variable (Argyrous, 2011). That is, it needed one more group of learners being taught by using Headway Series, as currently happens in the target workplace. This fact implies that future studies are still needed to determine the effect of an explicit genre-based approach in the workplace and other contexts. In brief, future research in different contexts will still need to interrogate the effect of an explicit genre-based approach by using a necessary number of control variables.

Another implication for research is that the present study has extended the investigation of an explicit genre-based approach to helping learners improve the readability of their texts. To do that, the study focused on the allowable order of moves, the choice of informational Theme and thematic progressions. The fact that the result of the allowable order of moves reached statistical significance lends some support to the arguments made by Eggins (2004) that the staging of a genre enhances the recognition of a communicative purpose. Similarly, the fact that the choice of informational Theme appeared to reach statistical significance (see

Table 17, p. 185) tentatively supports Martins' (1986) consideration that the presence of informational Theme enhances readability (in Berry, 1995), although learners were still seen to mostly choose interactional Theme (See discussion on Pages 187–9).

However, the fact that thematic progression did not demonstrate statistical significance implies that future studies should still interrogate its effect. As the present study assessed readability in short email requests, future studies should assess thematic progression to compare the readability of short and long texts. More succinctly, the present study implies that a future research question should be asked as to what the influence of thematic progression is on readability in short and long texts.

Other features that could impinge on the readability of a workplace text, and which were not investigated in the present study and previous studies, are those that have to do with nominal groups and verbal groups in a text (Butt et al. 2000; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Regarding nominal groups, attention could be drawn to nominalisation of Subjects in workplace texts that are mostly read by foreign language learners. For example, the readability of '*I am writing to request extended leave*' (non-nominalised subject) could be compared with the readability of '***The reason for my writing*** is to request extended leave' (nominalised subject). In comparing the effects of non-nominalised and nominalised Subjects, future studies will also be comparing the effects of different process types for readability in workplace texts. For example, the effect of material

processes would be compared with the effect of relational processes in the readability of workplace texts in a given context.

All in all, the present study was conducted in a particular context of language use, so the findings obtained initially apply to such a context. The findings may also apply to similar contexts, but a recommendation is made that different contexts should validate them before using them as a basis for teaching practice. Furthermore, future studies may extend the present study by investigating the further research questions presented above or others that are deemed necessary.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Institutional Consent Request

Dear Learning and Development Manage,

Re: Consent Request

I am currently pursuing a doctorate in education at The Open University, and I am preparing to begin work on data collection for the project entitled '**The effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching workplace writing**'. This project is a requirement for the degree of doctorate in education, and I have designed it to improve my practice as a teacher and provide students with the writing knowledge they need for their workplace. For the project, I will collect data from the students, the potential readers of the students' texts, and I will engage students in a classroom in order to assess the effectiveness of the approach I aim to evaluate.

As the process of data collection involves a number of ethical issues such as dealing with personal and our company's data privacy, I am seeking your consent to begin the project.

From the students, I aim to collect texts that they write on their daily basis. I will then analyse the texts in order to understand what the students already know and what aspects of writing they might need support with. From the students, I will also record some classroom interactions in order for me to understand how well the students gain knowledge through the approach used. From the readers of the students' texts, I will seek to understand the aspects that are considered relevant for a text to communicate successfully.

Throughout the process of data collection, I will comply with our company's data Privacy Policy (Policy 580). That is to say, I will seek all the participants' consent, use the data only for the purpose of research, keep participants' identities anonymous, and destroy all the data when the project has ended.

Please sign below by choosing one of the following options.

☐ I permit you to start the project.

Signature..... Date:

☐ I do not permit you to start the project.

Signature..... Date:

Thank you very much for your consent.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Albino

Appendix 2: Participant's Consent Form



The Open University

Student Consent Form

Project title: The effects of genre-based approaches to teaching workplace writing

If you agree to participate in this research project, please tick the box. Additionally, complete the details below and return the signed form. At any time during the research, you are free to withdraw and to request the destruction of any data that have been gathered from you, up to the point at which data are aggregated for analysis.

Your participation or non-participation will not affect your access to tutorial support or the results of your assessments.

The results of any research project involving The Open University Students constitute personal data under the Data Protection Act. They will be kept secure and not released to any third party. All data will be destroyed once the project is complete.

☐ I agree to participate in this research project, and I give my permission for the data collected to be used in an anonymous form in any written reports, presentations and published papers relating to this project. My written consent will be sought separately before any identifiable data are used in such dissemination.

Signing this form indicates that you understand the purpose of the research, as explained in the email, and accept the conditions for handling the data you provide.

Please tell me the best way to contact you in case I need to. Include full details, for example, full telephone number or email address:

.....

Name:.....

(Please print)

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Please return completed form to: gabriel.albino@yahoo.com

Appendix 3: Tasks used for the experiment in the pilot study

Days	Experimental group			Control group
	Genre task phases	Interactions	Observations	Non-genre tasks
1	Input: presenting the two texts and participants answering questions about field, tenor, and mode.	Participants in pairs; Researcher and participants as a whole class	The task generated a lot of talk between participants when exchanging their ideas, especially regarding the relationship between the writer and the reader.	Answering true/false questions about the texts.
2	Pedagogic: discriminating schematic structures Target: discriminating schematic structures	Researchers and participants Learners in pairs	Learners found no difficulties identifying the schematics structures	Answering comprehension questions based on the information underlined in the text.
3	Pedagogic: discriminating clauses in the text: (a) underlining process forms, (b) identifying clause boundaries, (c) identifying clause constituents: subject-finite-predicator-complement-adjunct, (d) analyzing the relationship between subject and finite.	Researcher and the participants as a whole class	The terms process, finite and adjunct were unfamiliar to participants, so they were taught to them explicitly.	Writing questions base on the formation in the first text.
4	Target: discriminating clauses in the text: (a) underlining process forms, (b) identifying clause boundaries, (c) identifying clause constituents: subject-finite-predicator-complement-adjunct	Participants in pairs	Two participants still had difficulties identifying the finite, so the instruction was reinforced.	Writing questions base on the formation in the second text.
5	Target: participants writing an email to their supervisors to ask for more two days off apart from the weekend.	Participants writing individually.		Writing a reply to an email.

Appendix 4: Instructional texts, adapted from inlingua business writing, Trainer's Manual, 2002, p. 85

Email A

From: Figa, Miguel (mfgi)
To: Ferreira, Manuel (MZER)
Cc:
Subject: Transport request

Hi Manuel,

I'm writing to request your help. I need a car to take Mr Owen from the Staff House to the international airport tomorrow morning, **but** the car of my department broke down this morning. **So** please lend me one of the cars that you have in stock.

I know **that** your department has been short of cars lately, but I'll really appreciate it if you help me out of this situation. I will tell the driver to take the freeway so that the car comes back to you as quickly as possible.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,

Miguel

Email B

From: Lopez, Marianne
To: Dawson, Sylvia
Cc:
Subject: Request for extended leave

Dear Ms Dawson

I am getting married in December and as my fiancé and I are planning a long trip for our honeymoon, I would like to request extended leave as follows:

Month and year	Week Nos.	Holiday status
December 2013	50-52	Three weeks annual holiday for 2013
January & February 2014	1-5	Three weeks annual holiday for 2014 plus two weeks unpaid leave.

I realise that this is an exceptional request, but I would be very grateful if you could grant this leave. My extended absence can be unpaid. Alternatively, I can work an extra hour when I return until I complete the time I owe the company.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Marianne

Appendix 5: Audio recording transcripts--researcher-participant interactions in the experiment

Transcription symbols:

(,) indicates a brief pause, (.) indicates a long pause, (?) indicates a question, and (...) indicates difficult speech to transcribe as a result of speech overlap—participants speaking at the same time, R stands for 'researcher', G1 stands for 'Group 1' and so on, PPs stand for 'Participants', and [. . .] stands for text removed.

Recording 1: Setting the context

1. R: Right. So let's see. Question 1. What are the emails about? A volunteer?
2. G1: Ah, the email, ah talk about transportation request. And request for extended, extended leave
3. R: Do you agree? (teacher addressing other groups)
4. PPs: Yes
5. G2: about extended vacation
6. R: Extended?
7. G2: Vacation
8. R: Vacation?
9. G3: Yes
10. R: Ok. Right. And what about B?
11. G3: B is the subject
12. R: Mm hmm
13. G4: The subject helped to understand the email
14. R: Also for you, the subject helped you?
15. G1: Mm hmm
16. R: And you?
17. G2: The subject
18. G2: But it's going to put the subject
19. R: Mm hmmm
20. G4: Also the subject should actually tell what the email is all about
21. R: Ok
22. G3: Just by reading the email we should have an idea that what we are going to need is this and that
23. R: Ok. This is for A. What about for B?
24. G4: This is the same for B as well.
25. R: The same?
26. G4: Mm hmm
27. R: Good. C. who wrote and who received each email? Email A. Who wrote it?
28. PPs: Figa Miguel
29. R: Pardon?
30. PPs: Figa Miguel. Figa Miguel to Ferreira Manuel
31. R: Who received it?
32. G4: Ferreira Manuel
33. R: Ferreira Manuel. And D? In which email do you, do the writer
34. PPs:
35. R: Mm hmm?
36. G3: Lopez Mariane to Sylvia
37. R: In which, Ok, in which, in which, in which email do the writer and the reader have a close relationship?
38. PPs: A, A, A
39. R: Who can, who can explain why?
40. G1: The way he, the way he, he wrote seems they, they kind of of eh eh friendship
41. R: Mm hmm
42. G2: Yeah I think the, the, how he knows that he has some car in stock? He used to visit them
43. R: Mm hmm
44. G2: You know, yeah

45. G3: And also "hello Manuel"
 46. R: Hello Manuel
 47. PPs: Hello Manuel
 48. G1: They bro, they are brother
 49. R: Brother?
 50. G1: yeah
 51. PPs: <Laughter>
 52. R: Ok, anybody else wants to elaborate on?
 53. G3: Yes. We also based on that. Hello Manuel
 76. G4: We have an email which we can see that saying that "hello Manuel"
 77. R: Mm hmm
 78. G4: To show that they have a close relationship
 79. R: Ok
 80. G3: And also the way he express himself: "I need", You know
 81. R: Mm hmm
 82. G3: Someone that you don't know ... I need this
 83. R: Ok, right. Any other comments? Anybody else wants to, to say something?
 84. G1: Miguel knows about Manuel. knows about Manuel life
 85. R: Mm hmm
 86. G3: He knows exactly what, what he has, what he doesn't have, what's happening with, with his car, you know, with his car ... I think
 [. . .]
 107. R: Right. So, we, we, we know these differences by looking at words, the words they use to write, right? What does it mean to you on daily work? What lesson do you learn from this? For your daily work?
 108. G3: ... we have to understand when we send emails for a close friend or someone that we know
 109. R: Mm hmm
 110. G3: or to someone that you don't know, for instance. For someone that we don't know
 111. R: Mm hmm
 112. G3: So this is leads us to, to have a insight
 113. R: Mm hmm
 114. G3: That there is a ways for, you know, for communicating or to expressing, you know, to a close friend or someone that you know
 115. R: Mm hmm
 116. G3: To a different a person that we we don't know
 117. R: Ok
 118. G1: For me, that, eh, I didn't pay attention when I'm writing to someone that I don't know
 146. G1: My supervisor, I have a supervisor which is a American
 147. R: Mm hmm
 148. G1: And when he writes an email to me, he he say "Pablo". My name's Pablo. Do this, and that. And when I I reply the email to him, I say "Fred" I did this, his name is "Fred"
 [. . .]

Recording 2: Identification of moves. Discussion on obligatory and optional moves

- [. . .]
 9. R: Ok. Then so let let's consider the first one Ok, what is this?
 10. G3: the subject
 11. R: the subject. right? What is in the subject?
 12. G4: the summary
 13. R: the summary
 14. G3: the topic
 15. R: the topic
 16. G1: the message
 17. R: the message
 18. G1: I mean the need
 19. R: the need, Ok, we can say, the content Ok (writing), the content. What's number 2?

Number 2 is "Dear MS Dorson". What's this?
 20. PPs: the greeting
 21. R: greeting, what else can we call it? Greeting, right? (writing) greeting or salutation. Then we have "I'm getting married in December and as my fiancé and I are planning a long trip for a honeymoon, I'd like to request extended leave as follows." What is that?
 22. G2: introduction
 23. R: Mm hmm?
 24. G1: introduction
 25. R: That is?
 26. G3: Introduction
 27. R: Introduction? Introduction?
 28. G4: concern
 29. R: Concern
 30. G1: Plan
 31. R: Plan, what else? That's the reason for writing.
 32. G2: the reason?
 33. R: the reason for writing (writing). The reason for writing, right? Reason for writing what?
 34. G3: the request
 35. R: the request. Reason for writing
 36. G3: the request
 37. R: and then we have the, a table. What's this table doing?
 38. G3: he developed the
 39. R: sorry?
 40. G3: he developed the
 41. G4: he was clarifying details
 42. R: clarifying details, Mm hmm? Yes, you said something
 43. G2: timing
 44. R: timing, Ok
 45. G3: summary
 46. R: Summary, Ok
 47. G1: data
 [. . .]
 53. G2: Well we call this, it's all about ah, conclusion
 54. R: Conclusion? What is this? "I realize that this is an exceptional request"
 55. PPs: ...
 56. R: What is what is the writer expressing here? What is the writer expressing here?
 57. G4: How important is this request
 58. R: Mm hmmm
 63. G1: he expresses that he he realizes that this isn't easy
 64. R: Ok, that's fine. So she she she knows that it's not easy
 65. G1: he's trying to
 66. R: Ok
 [. . .]
 82. R: Ok so what is what is she trying to do? What is she trying to do?
 83. G2: to deal
 84. R: Ok, yes, you have anything to say?
 85. G1: I'm wanting to to express that I know is difficult I want to releasing her
 86. R: Mm hmm
 87. G2: ah but she can compensate
 88. R: Ok
 89. G2: she can compensate compensate agreeing that she can be paid or probably working extra, extra time
 90. R: Ok , right
 91. G3: it is negotiate
 92. R: It is?
 93. G3: Negotiate
 94. R: Negotiate. Very good. Negotiation. Negotiation of what? I was looking for that.

Negotiation of what?

95. G3: of the request

96. R: of the request. Very good (writing)

97. PPs: <laughter>

98. R: negotiation of the request. All right. The next one is "I look forward to hearing from you."

What is this?

99. G1: conclusion

[. . .]

106. R: Ok. The writer already said a lot of things, and here he

107. G1: asking

108. R: asking for?

109. PPs: feedback

116. R: the reader is reading, when he arrives here, what does this do to the reader?

117. G2: this is reply back. To reply back

118. R: Ok. So this reinforces the request. It's a reinforcement. Reinforcement of the request.

Sometimes you say "I look forward to hearing from you about my request." Sometimes we say this.

Ok? Reinforcement of the request. Reinforcement. Number 8 is "best regards". What is this?

119. G1: greeting.

120. R: sorry?

121. G1: greeting

122. R: greeting? Ag again?

123. G3: Kind of good bye

124. R: kind of good bye. Yes. It's a kind of good bye. Ok, kind of good bye. So we say this, what name can we give, this is a ah good bye, you finish your conversation.

125. G2: closing

126. R: closing. So we can call it a good bye or

127. PPs: closing

128. R: closing. And Number 9. Number 9 is Marianne. What's this?

129. PPs: a signature

130. R: this?

131. G4: a signature

[. . .]

140. R: why shouldn't we leave this out? Why should this be, always be present?

141. G3: because it tell us what what what the email about

142. G4: it will also identify the bunch of emails you receive. By the content, you will see which one

143. R: Mm hmm

144. G2: Yeah, we may have a hundred of emails, I will start reading one by one. I need to give priority

145. R: Mm hmm

146. G1: by by having the content, I can I can decide I need to start with this one. It is very important

147. R: Ok. So this means that this content, in writing this content, what do we have to do? In writing this part?

148. G1: we have to be specific

149. R: we have to be?

150. G1: specific

151. R: Specific. Ok so, it should always be there. And when we write it, we have to be specific. Greeting. Can we leave this out in an email? For example in this kind of email? Can we leave this out?

152. G2: No

153. R: No?

154. PPs:

155. R: Mm hmm

156. G4: personal notes . always ...

157. R: Mm hmm

158. G3: It depend of email

159. R: Mm hmmm
 160. G3: if we are very close
 161. R: Mm hmmm
 162. G2: I think we can ...
 163. R: Ok
 164. G2: you can send email and start logo (the underlined is Portuguese for "straight") with with reason
 165. G2: when you start the greeting
 166. R: Mm hmm
 167. G2: be a manager or a co-worker
 168. R: Mm hmm
 169. G: he give he gives he put the person comfortable
 170. R: Mm hmm
 171. G2: because if you just started, well, this is my concern. So do this. I need this. So, it sounds like you are trying trying just to demand this person or you just, you know, to scaring him
 [. . .]
 201. G4: actually when you write an email, you have a reason
 202. R: Mm hmm
 203. G4: you have to maintain it <laughter>
 204. R: Ok
 205. G3: when you write an email, here, "Donson, I look forward to hearing from you"
 206. PPs: <laughter>
 207. R: Ok and what about number 4? Details of the request. Can we keep this or sometimes we leave it out?
 208. G3:
 209. R: Mm hmm
 210. G3: sometimes we don't need
 211. R: But if you don't give the details, for example, what happens for the approver, because you need an approval
 212. G3: <laughter>
 213. G3: maybe he will reply back and ask you "what are you looking for?"
 214. R: If you don't have the details. You want approval. Your approver will look at
 215. PPs:
 216. R: Mm hmmm. And supportive statement? Can we keep this always or sometimes do we leave it out?
 217. G1: for approval, there is a need.
 218. R: right. What do you guys think? What do you think? What do you others think about this? Do you think we should always keep it or sometimes we can leave it out? You gave the reason, you gave the details, and you have supportive statement. Do you think we should keep this all the time?
 219. G4: I think it depends on the type of request. There are some types of requests
 220. R: Mm hmmm
 221. G4: ... s
 222. R: Ok so this is optional, right? We can have it or we can leave it out. No problem. And negotiation of the request
 [. . .]
 233. G1: yes. Your supervisor or superintendent will see that he is actually willing to support us and also
 234. R: Mm hmm
 235. G1: even by, you know, having to receive or to receive
 236. R: Mm hmm
 237. G1: he is willing to assist us
 238. R: that's number 6. Right?
 239. G4: yeah
 240. R: Ok number 6 should always be there because you show that you are really a responsible person
 241. G4: Yes
 242. R: You show responsibility. Right? You show cooperation. Cooperation is important in

business. When you cooperate. You want you want some days, days off, but then you want to cooperate

243. G2:

244. R: Ok. And reinforcement of the state of the request

245. G2: It is also important

246. R: important also?

247. G3: Always

248. R: Always? Do you agree? Do you all agree with always?

249. G4: not always <laughter>

[. . .]

265. G3: the person who the person who, you know, you communicate with sees respect

266. R: Ok

267. G1: is not depend of being grateful

268. R: Mm hmm

269. G1: ... spoke with him to to respond really

270. R: Ok

271. G1:

272. R: Ok. If we were to compare a face-to-face communication. So we said that the greeting here is like when you come to talk to the person, you first of, you first of all greet. If you don't greet, the person fees bad. Right?

273. G2: Mm hm yeah

274. R: And how what what do you equate the closing with in content with face-to-face conv conversation?

275. G4: say good bye to someone

276. R: Mm hmm

277. G4: you say eh, have a good, for closing the conversation

278. R: Mm hmm

279. G4: say good bye. I think the person feel better

280. R: Ok. So if you don't put the closing, it is like when you come to talk to the person, you finish the conversation, and leave without saying anything

281. PPs: <laughter>

282. G2: you took his time, you know

283. R: right

284. G2: you took his time. You need to be

285. R: Mm hmm

286. G2: thankful

287. R: Ok

288. G1: you need to say "thank you"

289. PPs: ...

[. . .]

297. PPs: ... you confirm yourself that I did it

298. R: Mm hmm

299. G4: information, message or request

300. R: Ok

301. G3: You assume yourself your responsibility

302. G2: sometime I can send email with with a different email. Maybe

303. R: with the?

304. G2: different

305. R: Ok

306. G1: maybe he he didn't, he don't know about the the my different email, and I need to to put my signature

307. R: your signature?

308. G1: if someone else reads the email, there can be the chain of the communication

309. R: Mm hmm

310. G1: coming from different persons

311. R: That's right

312. G1: they will, they will call the workers ... so you can see how the conversation is progressing

313. R: Mm hmm. But you can look at the top. At the, at the "from". In the outlook, you look at the "from".
314. PPs: If there is a signature
315. R: Mm hmm
316. G3:
317. R: Ok so for those who share email, it's very important to sign. Right? In the "from", the name doesn't come.

Recording 3: Comments on the analysis of text into clauses (verbal groups identification and the then discrimination of clauses; how students think the instruction can help them)

[. . .]

8. G4: ... this will help us to determine like the whether our re, our writing has make sense or not. You can understand it or not
9. R: Ok, right. Any other comments? How do you think this can help you with your everyday writing? Any other comments?
10. G3: Yeah I think will, will help us to think step, step by step
11. R: Mm hmmm
12. G3: To to compose the the all the all letter or or an email
13. R: Mm hmmm, Ok
14. G4: Ah help us to think thinking in parts
15. R: In parts?
16. G4: Yeah
17. R: Right
18. PPs:
19. R: Mm hmmm
20. G1: Each clause has has a group
21. G2: Mm hmm ... helps us be understandable
22. R: Understandable. Alright, so, as we said, verbal groups are like the heart. If you don't have the heart, what happens?
23. G1: You die
24. PPs: <laughter>
- [. . .]

Recording 4: Comments on identification of groups in clauses by asking questions (who, what, where etc. Participants' perception of the importance of this)

[. . .]

19. G4: Yes. I think those, those are the questions that they will be asking himself to make, understand the message
20. R: Mm hmm
21. PPs: <Laughter>
22. R: The reader, right?
23. G3: Yeah yeah the reader. The reader yeah yeah yeah
24. G1: Yeah will be asking these questions himself
25. R: Mm hmm
26. G1: To make clear
27. G1: If he can't get an answer, something is wrong
28. G2: You will be receiving phone calls
29. R: You will be receiving?
30. G4: Phone calls <laughter>
- [. . .]

Recording 5: Joint negotiation (teacher and students writing an emails to make a request)

[. . .]

51. G1: Yeah because his intent is to tell him what
52. G2: Because I I I need to say first what I'm, what I have the problem
53. R: Ah, your problem
54. G2: and then I'll go
55. G3: yeah
56. R: so so in this case, we say the first, you say your problem. right?
57. G3: Yeah
58. R: So how do we start then? What's your problem? In this case, look at this instruction. What's your problem?
59. PPs:
60. R: Ok That's fine. Ok, you say. First you say what's your problem, you say your problem
61. SS:.....
62. R: Let him finish first (referring to a student). Please don't forget your idea. yeah?
63. G2: ... this right moment
64. R: Mm hmm
65. G3: I'm building my house
66. R: Mm hmm. Ah, how do you start? How do you start?
67. G2: At this right moment,
68. G1: From this right moment
69. R: Ok (writing), moment, from this right moment, I'm building
70. PPs:
71. R: Ok that's fine. No problem. from this right moment, Mm hmm (writing) my house
72. G1: That will take me two more days to finish
73. R: Take me two, two more days to finish. Ok then, what comes next? So, Ok. So let's use your words. Ok? Therefore, therefore(writing), therefore
74. G4: I'm requesting
75. R: I'm requesting (writing), I'm requesting
76. G3: If you could
77. R: Mm hmm? If you could (writing)
78. G3: Cover me or
79. R: If you could cover for me. If you, if you could cover for me or?
80. G2: Stay
81. R: If you could cover for me, stay
82. G2: Extra, to stay for two more days
83. R: For two more days, no? For two, stay for two more days. Two more days. Ok. Right, so,
84. G1: Looking forward to hear from you
85. R: No no
86. G3: No no <laughter>
87. G2: Not yet
88. R: Ok, not yet
89. G3: Now we need to have a deal
90. R: To have a deal?
91. G3: Let's deal
[. . .]
200. R: Oh. We eliminate this, right? And our email begins here. Ok, our email begins here. "From this right moment." No, no sorry sorry sorry. We eliminate this one. We keep this. "Hi", "hi Lucy", right?
201. "Hi Lucy",
202. "From this right moment, I'm building my house which will take me two more days to finish. Therefore, I'm requesting if you could cover for me for more, for two more days."
203. So when you finish here, now he knows why he is receiving the email and all you need. He knows what you need. Ok? It was stated here already (showing the subject line), but here is more specific. You just say here extra days request, no? But here you specify the days. It's more specific. So,
204. "I know it's hard to stay longer than 28 days, but your cooperation with this matter is helpful."
205. Why is it helpful?
206. "I'm building a house at the moment and the rent has gone higher."

207. "Ok, so my back-to-back is suffering" (referring to the reader).
208. PPs: <laughter>
209. R: "I can stay four days." Four more days. It's a mistake here. Four (writing) "I can stay four more days beyond my normal schedule. Looking forward to hearing from you, Pablo." So you have the email.
210. G1: I will use this email
211. PPs: <laughter>
[. . .]

Recording 6: Participants' comments on writing concisely

- [. . .]
11. G4: And think we, when the the text is a short, we can avoid mistakes
12. G2: I think the reader will be happy because eh the message is short and clear
13. R: Mm hmm
14. G2: Understandable
15. R: Understandable?
16. G2: Yeah
17. G1: Instead of instead of saying blab blab blab, a computer, and the the I trust, too much words
18. R: Mm hmm
19. G1: the reader can get confused. If you, you went straight, you need a computer, I understand this. so he will be happy
20. R: Mm hmm
21. G3: yeah but when we write more words, we can make more mistakes
22. G1: mistakes yes
23. R: Ok
24. G2: The interest also for the, for the reader
25. R: Mm hmm
26. G2: If I'm reading a text and looks like everything is repetitive, I may stop by then
27. R: Mm hmm
[. . .]

Appendix 6: Questionnaire for the specialist informants

Requesting collaboration

Dear leader

I am a student with The Open University, and I am doing research to find ways of improving our employees' writing skills. The title of the research is 'The effect of an explicit genre-based approach to teaching workplace writing'. In order to join our efforts in helping our employees, I would like your voluntary participation by answering the questions below.

When answering the questions, you will have circles and boxes. Where you have circles you can choose only one answer, but where you have boxes you can choose more than one answer.

When you finish Question 7, click on 'Finish Survey' at the bottom, right-hand corner of the page. Then close the page. Your answers will be submitted.

Thank you in advance again.

1. If an email came from an employee of mine, what would quickly motivate me to open it is

- ☐ the employee's name
- ☐ the content in the subject line
- ☐ Other (Please specify):

2. When reading a letter, memo, email, or report, I care about

- ☐ the content only
- ☐ the content and the grammar
- ☐ Other (Please specify):

3. On a daily basis, at my workplace I mostly read

- ☐ letters
- ☐ memos
- ☐ emails
- ☐ reports
- ☐ Other (Please specify):

4. For me, a well written letter, memo, email, or report must

- ☐ use simple language
- ☐ use complex language such as undefined technical terms
- ☐ explicitly clarify the purpose of the document
- ☐ Other (Please specify):

5. I like it if, in an email, an employee of mine addresses me by

- ☐ my first name
- ☐ my family name
- ☐ both my first and my family names
- ☐ my nickname
- ☐ any of the forms above

6. If I received the following text formats:

Text Format A

I accomplished two tasks last week. In the first task I met with our vendors at the Hotel Alvalade, and in the second task I created three learning events for Chicala Building. The two tasks were positive because our vendors were satisfied with us as customers, and the learning events reached the number of participants we were expecting.

Text Format B

I accomplished the following two tasks last week:

1. Meeting with our vendors at the Hotel Alvalade.
2. Creating three learning events for Chicala Building.

The two tasks were positive because our vendors were satisfied with us as customers, and the learning events reached the number of participants we were expecting.

I would prefer:

- Text Format A
- Text Format B
- Both Text Formats A and B

7. So far, the time I have worked for the company is within the range of

- 1–5 years
- 5–10 Years
- 11–20 years
- 21–30 years
- 31–45 years

Appendix 7: Lesson plan in the main study: A summary

Day	Lesson stage	Aim	Task	Material	Focus	Observations
1	Setting the context	To explore the notion of register: Field, tenor and mode To explore the notion of register: Field, tenor and mode	Answering questions about the text Discussing the learning from the task	Emails A and B (Appendix 3) Emails A and B (Appendix 3)	Group work R-P	Purpose of the text easily identified by learners through the subject line; Interactants were easily identified through 'to' and 'from' facilities; a difficulty in identifying close relationships through linguistic choices was observed. Learning to vary language according to audience was observed at the end.
2	Modelling 1	1. To familiarize learners with the notion of moves; 2. To distinguish obligatory and optional moves	1. Identifying moves and their aims; 2. Discussing obligatory and optional moves	Email B (Appendix 3) Email B (Appendix 3)	Group work/ R-P R-P	Difficulty in identifying moves was observable through the choice of 'introduction', 'development' and 'conclusion'; perception of the need to functionally name parts of a text was noticed at the end; perception of the need for some moves to present and others to be absent was evident through class discussion
3	Modelling 2	To analyse ideational and textual meaning	1. Underlining verbal groups 2. Splitting a text into clauses 3. Analysing clause boundaries 4. Commenting on the relevance of the tasks	Email A (Appendix 3)	Group work/ R-P	The fact that a text must make sense to a reader was noticed; the noticing of a step-by-step thought in organizing a text was observed.
4	Modelling 3	To identify clauses in a text	1. Identifying more groups in clauses by	Email A (Appendix 3)	Group work	Learners noticed the need to answer all the

			using question words such as 'who', 'what' and 'why'. 2. Focusing on thematic choices and progression.		R-P	potential questions when writing.
5	Joint Negotiation 1	To engage learners in the construction of the target genre	Prompting learners to contribute ideas as the genre is constructed.	Instruction on p. 126, Figure 7, of this thesis	R-P	Learners perceived the need to make appropriate linguistic choices; learners actively contributed ideas to construct the text.
6	Independent construction 1	To assess learners understanding of the genre	Constructing the genre independently of the teacher; Peer assessment of the genre constructed independently	Instruction on p. 169 of this thesis	Group work Group work	Learners were able to use all the moves as discussed in in the modelling stage; learners still showed some inconsistencies, but the inconsistencies did not appear to impede the conveyance of intended meaning; learners made appropriate thematic choices
7	Modelling 4 and Joint Negotiation 2	To write a text concisely	Identification of redundancies in the text Feedback	Appendix 6	Group work; R-P	Learners noticed the need to make a text concise through their comments on the task done. The fact that learners' sample texts were short appeared to be attributable to the fear of making mistakes when writing a long text.
8	Independent Construction 2	To assess understanding of concise writing	Peer review of concise writing; more task on an email to make a request	Appendix 5	Group work	Abilities to split a text into clauses were evident. Learners also identified successful and unsuccessful features of each other's texts.
9	Independent Construction	To assess the understanding	Writing an email to	Reference to	Individual work	Same as above+ ability to write

	3	of the genre and writing concisely	request three hours out of office to resolve a personal problem	previous material		texts concisely.
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Appendix 8: An email containing redundancies, prepared by the researcher

From: Ernesto, Joana
To: Peter, Bob
Cc:
Subject: Needed a behavioural report this afternoon

Dear Mr. Peter:

I am glad to receive the personnel that you delivered training from 21 June to 1 October 2013. The personnel have already begun to implement positive changes in the department, and the department management is satisfied. As the department takes into account both behaviours and results, I would like to request a detailed report of how the trainees behaved during the training.

I know that you are delivering new training at the moment, but your cooperation at this point in time will be valuable to both my department and your department. My department intends to prepare a new list of candidates for your next training but due to the fact that you have not sent the report yet, the process is delayed. My department has an intention to have your training centre as a permanent place for courses.

I look forward to receiving the report by 5 p.m. today.

Sincerely,

Joana

Appendix 9: Raw scores on readability

Participant	Test 1			Test 2			
	Scorer 1	scorer 2	Average 1	Scorer 1	Scorer 2	Average 2	Group
1	5	4	4.5	9	7	8	c- control
2	5	8	6.5	7	3	5	c
3	4	8	6	6	7	6.5	e-experimental
4	4	8	6	8	9	8.5	e
5	6	8	7	7	9	8	e
6	7	8	7.5	6	7	6.5	e
7	5	9	7	9	8	8.5	e
8	6	8	7	7	9	8	e
9	3	6	4.5	10	7	8.5	e
10	6	9	7.5	7	7	7	c
11	5	7	6	8	7	7.5	e
12	5	6	5.5	7	6	6.5	c
13	4	7	5.5	7	6	6.5	e
14	6	7	6.5	7	7	7	c
15	6	8	7	6	7	6.5	e
16	6	8	7	6	5	5.5	c
17	5	2	3.5	7	6	6.5	c
18	4	4	4	9	7	8	e
19	7	8	7.5	7	8	7.5	e
20	6	8	7	7	8	7.5	e
21	5	6	5.5	8	6	7	e
22	4	4	4	7	5	6	e
23	6	9	7.5	8	5	6.5	e
24	5	7	6	7	9	8	e
25	4	9	6.5	6	6	6	c
26	4	8	6	8	5	6.5	c
27	7	5	6	5	8	6.5	e
28	4	3	3.5	6	4	5	c
29	3	6	4.5	6	5	5.5	c
30	6	2	4	8	6	7	c
31	4	8	6	7	5	6	c
32	4	4	4	6	8	7	c
33	3	7	5	7	9	8	c
34	4	7	5.5	7	6	6.5	c
35	6	7	6.5	7	6	6.5	c
36	5	8	6.5	8	5	6.5	c

Appendix 10: Raw scores on moves

Participant	Test 1					Test 2					Group
	IM	MP	MM	OM	Result 1	IM	MP	MM	OM	Result 2	
1		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	exprim
2		4		7	0.57		7		7	1	control
3		6		7	0.86		6	2	7	0.71	control
4		6	2	7	0.71		7		7	1	exprim
5		6		7	0.86		7	2	7	0.86	exprim
6		6		7	0.86		6		7	0.86	exprim
7		6		7	0.86		6		7	0.86	exprim
8	1	7		7	0.93		6		7	0.86	exprim
9		7		7	1		6		7	0.86	exprim
10		6		7	0.86	1	5	1	7	0.57	control
11		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	control
12		6	2	7	0.71	1	6	1	7	0.71	control
13	1	7	2	7	0.79		7		7	1	exprim
14	1	7	1	7	0.86		6		7	0.86	control
15		4		7	0.57		7		7	1	exprim
16		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	control
17		5		7	0.71		6		7	0.86	exprim
18		6		7	0.86		6	1	7	0.79	control
19	1	7		7	0.93		6		7	0.86	exprim
20		6		7	0.86		5	2	7	0.57	control
21		5		7	0.71		5		7	0.71	control
22		4		7	0.57		6		7	0.86	control
23		5		7	0.71		5		7	0.71	control
24		6		7	0.86	1	6		7	0.79	control
25	1	6	1	7	0.71	1	7		7	0.93	control
26		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	exprim
27		6	2	7	0.71		7		7	1	control
28		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	exprim
29		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	exprim
30		6		7	0.86		6		7	0.86	exprim
31		6		7	0.86		6		7	0.86	control
32		6	2	7	0.71		5		7	0.71	control
33		6		7	0.86		7		7	1	exprim
34		5		7	0.71		6		7	0.86	exprim
35		6		7	0.86		6		7	0.86	exprim
36		6		7	0.86		4		7	0.57	control

Appendix 11: Raw scores on thematic progression

Participant	TP1	TP2	Group
1	7.14	9.23	e- experimental
2	10	10	c- control
3	6.67	10	c
4	7.5	4	e
5	8	7.78	e
6	8.75	8.33	e
7	8.33	9	e
8	8.75	10	e
9	7.5	10	e
10	8	8.33	c
11	7.77	10	c
12	8.88	7.14	c
13	4	10	e
14	9	10	c
15	10	10	e
16	8.57	7.5	c
17	0	8.75	e
18	6.66	10	c
19	7.14	8	e
20	10	8.89	c
21	8	10	c
22	6.66	10	e
23	9	10	c
24	6.66	8	c
25	8	8.75	c
26	5.55	10	e
27	7.5	10	c
28	10	8.18	e
29	10	10	e
30	9.09	6.67	c
31	10	10	c
32	1.14	7.27	e
33	0	0	e
34	10	8.57	e
35	7.5	8.89	c
36	5.625	5.625	c